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SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENT

Part I.

SOCIALISM or PARLIAMENT

The Burning Question of Today

By

GUY A. ALDRED

Third Edition, Finally Revised

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THE BURNING QUESTION OF TODAY

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GUY A. ALDRED

Third Edition, Finally Revised

GLASGOW
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CONTENTS

Forewords ... 3
I.—Parliamentarism Leads to Fascism ... 7
II.—Electioneering—And the Reason Why ... 8
III.—Parliamentarism: Its Rise and Failure ... 12
IV.—Labour in the Parliamentary Coach ... 17
V.—Foreign Policy and High Finance ... 23
VI.—The Oath of Allegiance ... 25
VII.—The Parliamentary Labour Press ... 28
VIII.—Speeches in Parliament ... 33
IX.—Practical Parliamentarism, War and Crisis ... 36
X.—The Power of the Streets ... 39
XI.—The Meaning of Labour Parliamentary Success ... 43
XII.—Parliament and the Unemployed ... 46
XIII.—Parliamentarism: 1832-1924 ... 47
XIV.—The I.L.P., Parliamentarism and MacDonaldism ... 49
XV.—Thomas Johnston ... 58
XVI.—Communist Parliamentarism ... 59
XVII.—Parliament's Place and the Rise of Labour ... 65

APPENDICES

I.—Author's Conversion to Anti-Parliamentarism ... 67
II.—S.P.G.B. Correspondence, 1906 ... 67
III.—The Movement (1907) ... 67
IV.—Anti-Parliamentarian Theory and Organisation Prior to the A.P.C.F. and Scottish Groups ... 71
V.—The Shettleston Election ... 73
VI.—Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation ... 75
VII.—F. W. Jowett ... 75
VIII.—United Socialist Movement ... 76
IX.—The Duke of Bedford ... 77

THREE FOREWORDS

One: 1926

This pamphlet has been rewritten and revised from a pamphlet, published in 1923, entitled *Socialism and Parliament*. I have embodied arguments and data published in the *Commune*, and regret that finances do not permit me to publish and to distribute a much larger indictment of Parliamentarism. But, incompleteness of impeachment notwithstanding, this essay is unanswerable.

Anti-Parliamentarism is now the recognised Socialism of the Proletariat. Labourism has attained to office, worthlessness, and obscurity. It is only a matter of a very short time before the workers demand that the Parliamentarians render an account of their alleged stewardship in full and open debate with the Anti-Parliamentarians. We invite such debate, because we believe in the democracy of the streets and would have the workers sit in judgment on Parliamentarism.

We know the Labour M.P.'s will use every art and twist to avoid facing penetrating discussion. But they will either have to pass into *immediate* obscurity or answer openly to such wholesome, if disquietening, opposition. For Anti-Parliamentarism has come to stay and to carry the cause of Socialism to triumph. Anti-Parliamentarism is the workers' path to the conquest of bread and freedom. It is Labour's next step.

The Parliamentarian has no case other than one of falsehood and deceit. This essay demonstrates that truth clearly, with grim respect for the logic of fact.

The appendices throw a little light on the evolution of Anti-Parliamentarism in Great Britain.

GLASGOW, *July* 7, 1926.

Two: 1934

When I commenced to revise this work for republication, it was my intention to make *Government by Labour*, issued in 1928, the second part. The size of the Mss. makes this impossible. The revised edition of *Government by Labour* will be published as a separate pamphlet, completing this work. I shall omit whatever portion has been embodied in the present work.

The facts brought together in this pamphlet are unanswerable. They condemn completely Parliamentarism. Unfortunately, they do not state with equal emphasis the case for Anti-Parliamentarism. It has to be acknowledged that Anti-Parliamentarism has not captured the imagination of the working class, with the result that even now the workers still cling to Labour Parliamentarism, and the Anti-

Parliamentary Communist Federation is reduced to a small group. I do not doubt that there are Anti-Parliamentarians up and down the country, but they are unorganised and ineffective.

The facts stated in this pamphlet, and the facts mentioned in this preface, must be reconciled and dovetailed into a working policy, in order that a new working class movement may be evolved. To this end, without negating my own vigorous Anti-Parliamentarism, I have published the pamphlet *Towards the Social Revolution* (February, 1934) and my preface to *Trotsky's Soviet Union* (March, 1934), and the essay in the May, 1934, *Socialist Special*, entitled "*The Workers Must Unite Now.*" This essay is divided into two parts: "1. *To the Anti-Parliamentarians,*" and "2. *To the Parliamentarians,*" and adopts the slogan: "*The United Proletariat. The Proletariat Parliamentary or the Proletariat Anti-Parliamentary, but The Proletariat United: One Nation, One Army, One Movement.*"

I commend this pamphlet to the workers not for the abstract ideas it expounds, or for the Anti-Parliamentary philosophy it expresses. All these may arise from bias. But the facts arise from no bias and are related in the interests of the workers' struggle. I leave the working class reader to draw his own conclusions and to act upon them. Delay is dangerous and solidarity and action are imperative. Let us enter into real revolutionary conference and decide on a policy that will unite the workers for the final struggle and the long-wished-for economic and political triumph of working class democracy.

GLASGOW, JUNE 16, 1934.

Three: 1942

Parliamentarism has liquidated itself, for practical purposes, in militarism. Throughout Europe the workers' conquest of social and political power, through the medium of the ruling class ballot box, and the democratic march to the promised land of peace and equity, by electioneering and careerist stages, has ended in disaster. The world is in flames and everywhere the parliamentarians and industrial opportunists, with some honourable exceptions, have become capitalism's most ardent patriots. Let it be granted that they see no way out; but let it be realised that for generations they have wasted the workers' hopes and trust by securing position for themselves under capitalism whilst reducing the workers' struggle to a mockery and futility.

Originally, this work was a propaganda indictment of parliamentary Socialism. Much of its argument and statement, declaring that parliamentarism led to militarism, war, and empire, has been vindicated completely by time. Its contention is no longer prophecy but history. That fact almost tempts me to alter many of the chapters and restate in present or past tense arguments that were expressed in the terms of the future. I think, however, that the record should stand, as far as possible, as previously written. Consequently, here and there the reader will be confronted with what appears to be an anachronism.

The first thirteen chapters are unaltered, except for a slight correction of reference in Chapter XI., dealing with William Morris and

the inclusion of my essays on his life and work in *Pioneer of Anti-Parliamentarism.* (*"Word" Library,* 1st Series, No. 7.) This work deals with the Anti-Parliamentarians of Britain, America, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Russia, and Holland. It is thus a biographical introduction to, and résumé of, an important phase of Socialist and world libertarian thought. Wherever essays are brought together in collected form, my desire is to refer to less fugitive publication to make connected reference and reading easier for the reader.

The 14th chapter has a small additional paragraph, following the paragraph, beginning "*On March 23rd,* 1925," and ending "*and Wheatley,*" The new paragraph opens "*I am not*" and ending "*demoralised their Socialism.*" The personal reference is softened but the impersonal indictment of parliamentary ineffectiveness is strengthened.

Chapter XV. is a new chapter dealing with Thomas Johnston. This chapter embodies also Appendix VII. of the 1934 edition.

Chapter XVI.—Chapter XV. of the 1934 edition—on "Communist Parliamentarism" is extended and made into an entirely new chapter. The time note, therefore, of Chapters XV and XVI. are at variance with the other chapters. This should emphasise the force of the main argument of this work.

Chapter XVII. was Chapter XVI. of the 1934 edition. It is unaltered.

Appendices I. and II. are reduced to references to *Dogmas Discarded* (*"Word" Library,* 1st series, Nos. 8 and 9)) because their text has been embodied in this work. Appendix VII. was *"Thomas Johnston"* in the 1934 edition. It is now *"F. W. Jowett."* This appendix consists of a tribute to Jowett for his stand against militarism. Jowett is a man of high Socialist principle, who does not accept parliamentary careerism or Cabinet government, but has an entirely different conception of democratic responsibility. He rejects anti-parliamentarism on principle, because he feels that it embodies the menace of violence, and instead of advancing freedom, threatens to develop dictatorship. Throughout his long life, Jowett has made a strenuous stand for Socialism and Anti-Militarism. He has opposed every war in which Great Britain has been involved and is a fearless enemy of chaos, exploitation, and violence. As a parliamentarian, he endeavoured to use the House of Commons as a Socialist sounding board.

Appendices VI. and VIII. are extended and brought up to date, as was necessary.

This work embodies considered opinions, and a way of approach to life and the social struggle, that we have held since 1906. This means that I have propagated and maintained them, suffering both poverty and imprisonment for so doing, for a period of thirty-six years. I have maintained and defended these opinions in a politically-democratic country where it was to my interest to expound parliamentary views. It is not too much to say that, to have varied my allegiance, would have given me a career. I have questioned myself often and been tempted from time to time. But the result has been the same. In honour, I could not vary my attitude, even though the temptation to occupy a national or even an international platform, and to command fame, appealed. It did appeal and it does

appeal still. But the price is too big: the surrender of one's integrity, the reduction of one's speech and one's writing to a studied insincerity The market is too black a one in which to deal. Consequently, it cannot be said that I left the Anti-Parliamentary movement. It must be acknowledged that the Anti-Parliamentary movement has left me. To-day, there is no Anti-Parliamentarian movement in Britain. With the liquidation of parliamentarism in militarism and war, the indictment of fact contained in this work passes into a warning from, and a record of history. The issue is no longer parliamentarism, but militarism. How Anti-Parliamentarian activities merged into the more direct Anti-militarist struggle will be shown in the new, forthcoming edition of my work, *At Grips with War.*

Because of this change of issue, I ally myself with the Anti-militarist forces of the country and the world, in the struggle towards a new social order of peace, liberty, and justice. I pledge myself to put aside all sectarian consideration and to support in every way those, who in or out of parliament, take their stand against the present horror. An atheist, I am the colleague of every Christian thinker and preacher who makes his pulpit a rostrum against war and the present nightmare of Paganism and slaughter. The struggle against parliamentarianism has ended. The struggle involves revolution: not the enshrinement of violence but the complete economic and social liquidation of violence.

In the 1934 edition it was stated that Part II. of *Socialism and Parliament* would be entitled *Government By Labour.* I have completed the MS. of this work, which is a complete history of the two Labour Governments. It will be published as soon as possible. That work will be followed by a *Socialist Who's Who,* giving the biographies of the various Labour leaders mentioned in these writings, and since deceased. This should make these writings of political value for reference, apart from their polemic value.

We have MSS. in hand for two further works completing the political record: one, a collection of essays, revised, from the columns of *The Spur* and *The Commune,* following the more interesting discussion in parliament and thus depicting the evolution of political careerism; and two, a complete and simply written revision of my work, *For Communism,* published in 1935, so as to describe the evolution of Bolshevism in the Soviet Union, its effect on the world development of labour, and giving a complete record of political persecution in the Soviet Union. This work will be a fine record of fact and the reader will be able to form his own conclusion.

Under war conditions, it will be difficult to publish these writings, but I shall endeavour to do so at as early a date as possible.

A final apology: Owing to paper restrictions it has been necessary to set this pamphlet in very small type. Perhaps one day it will be reprinted in larger type.

GUY A. ALDRED.

Glasgow, January 31st, 1942.

Socialism or Parliament

I. Parliamentarism Leads to Fascism

The advent of the Labour Opposition in the House of Commons, following upon the General Election of 1922, was welcomed by the workers. The near possibility of that opposition becoming His Majesty's Government, its unquestioned supplanting of the Liberal Party, revived their flagging interest in the question of Parliamentary action. Bitter plaints at the failure of Parliamentary methods were tempered with a faint hope that something might be achieved by Parliamentarism. That reform activity meant constant trotting round the fool's paradise, continuous movement in a vicious circle, a harvest of broken promises and disappointments, was forgotten. Something could be done, and should be done, for expectant mothers, for homeless couples wishing to housekeep, for rent resisters; something to reform this abuse or that crying scandal, to right wrong here or undo injustice and suffering there. It all seemed so sadly pressing, so imperative. Perhaps the Labour Opposition would attempt some alleviation, challenge the Government on the various aspects of the social misery questions, force an appeal to the electorate, and, becoming the Government in turn, accomplish urgent social reform. Perhaps! At least it was worth hoping for and even pursuing with active support.

The fact that capitalism is a hydra-headed monster, that the urgent reforms needed are as innumerable as the abuses begotten of the capitalist system, and that these abuses increase with every alleviation of capitalist administration, the better to perpetuate the system, was forgotten.

And so Labour Parliamentarism was permitted to define its programme in opposition until the General Election of 1923, after which, for nearly a year, it entrenched itself on the Treasury Benches. The legislation that followed, and the general policy pursued at home and abroad, disillusioned the optimism that had anticipated so fondly. The explanation was advanced, by would-be politicians, more jealous of place than of truth, that it was wrong to conclude that Parliamentarism was useless. All that had happened was that the wrong Parliamentarians, the wrong champions of Labour, had been returned to Westminster. If only the workers had sent the right kind of men there, *then*, of course, they would have been treated to the proper kind of fireworks. For that is all that these explosions at Westminster are—fireworks, just fireworks; winter nights' entertainments to keep the children quiet.

It never occurred to these apologists to realise that there is no proper kind of fireworks to right the wrongs of the poor, or to banish their anxiety; that, at the best, fireworks all grow damp at Westminster; and even were it otherwise, fireworks do not feed the

workers. The problem is to conquer bread and not to enjoy fireworks. There is no right job to be carried out at Westminster because social reconstruction is an industrial-social and not a Parliamentary problem. How, then, can the workers send the right men to the wrong place?

Parliamentarism is an illusion, but the Parliamentarians refuse to recognise the fact. The experience of Parliamentary action demonstrated its illusory character to the workers but left them bewildered as to the way out. Deceived and betrayed by Tory Parliamentarism, by Liberal Parliamentarism, and lastly, by Labour Parliamentarism, they turned to the National Government in the hope that they would discover the right kind of Parliamentarism in this semi-constitutional approach to Fascism. Even then the Labour Parliamentarians learned nothing.

Labour Parliamentarism has failed, although it drew its strength from the organised Proletariat. Did that fact disconcert the Parliamentarians? Not in the least. With colossal impudence they declared that the workers must resort to Left-wing Parliamentarism. And if that fails, "Communist" Parliamentarism. And if that fails, yet another, a Simon-pure *absolute* "Socialist" Parliamentarism. And so the deception continues to its exhaustion, ever ringing the changes, ever seeking the glorious hypocritical cause of individual careerism at the expense of the common people, the talked-to, the talked-at, and the talked-down Proletariat.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary to restate the arguments against Parliamentary activity, to explain and to prove that Parliament was never intended to emancipate the working class from the evils of capitalism, that it never can and never will achieve this result. For the function of Parliament is to arrest and not to develop the political integrity and social power of the working class, to enmesh and not to emancipate the workers. Parliamentary Labour representation is not the enfranchisement of the working class. It is the disfranchisement of the workers, the studied, slowly erected and extended political barriers of class society, to ward off the ever-threatening and finally inevitable social upheaval of the oppressed and exploited class.

Labour Parliamentarism is *not*, as the Anti-Parliamentarians believed prior to 1931, the last desperate barrage of class society. It is the democratic demoralisation of the workers, being prepared by their own leaders and high priests for the sacrifice; for the *coup d'etat* of the Counter-revolution. Parliamentarism leads inevitably to the Anti-Parliamentarism of Fascism and not to the Anti-Parliamentarism of the new Social Order. That is why Proudhon was right when he termed Universal Suffrage the Counter-revolution.

II. Electioneering—and the Reason Why

Parliamentarism involves electioneering. If the Parliamentarians really believed in the class struggle, and really represented the working class, Parliamentarism would *not* involve electioneering. The workers' actual struggle for emancipatory power is opposed completely to electioneering and all that electioneering implies. Down to 1931, when Ramsay Macdonald became head of th National Government, so much was clear from the very conditions under which electioneering

was conducted. The Fascist crisis does not seem to have taught the Parliamentarians much or to have changed their electioneering attitude. The Labour candidate of to-day has reverted to the conditions of 1922, when the Labour Party was in opposition. Our commentary therefore can be based on the Labour Party campaign of that time; for the Labour Party is aspiring again to become His Majesty's Government.

Before even a single vote has been obtained the Labour candidate has compromised. His very candidature exposes the weakness and inefficiency of Parliamentary action. Seeking votes from an electorate anxious for some immediate reform, he puts aside the need for social emancipation to pander to some passing bias for urgent useless amelioration. He panders to prejudice, and avoids facts. This is because Parliament is an institution existing for the defence of class society, the domination of man by man, the representation of opinions, and not the administration by the wealth producers of the wealth produced. Consequently the candidate must time the pulse of capitalist society, subject his first principles to the opinions arising out of capitalist conditions, to current local superstitions and respectabilities and immediate needs or fancied interests. He does not aim at assisting the toilers to secure the direct administration of wealth production by the wealth producers in the interests of the wealth producers. He aims only at representing as toilers, in the capitalist political institution, the opinion of men who must remain toilers so long as the Parliamentary system continues. Pandering to capitalist needs and interests, electioneering stifles the revolutionary idea without which the Social Revolution and the Industrial Commonwealth can never be achieved.

Nothing illustrates better the truth of this indictment of the worthlessness of electioneering than the privately issued "points for canvassers" that was embodied in a circular issued by John Wheatley at the 1924 General Election. We excerpt the following precious items of advice:—

"Remember, the canvasser is Mr. Wheatley's representative."

"Mr. Wheatley would like to call personally on all electors. As this is impossible, he sends a friend in his place."

"Many of the electors have never met nor heard the candidate."

"They will judge the candidate by the canvasser."

"Create the impression that Mr. Wheatley asked you to call on this man specially."

"Open with—"Mr. Wheatley has asked me to call on you as he himself, of course is too busy.' "

"'He desires your vote, and I would like to be able to assure him that he can depend on you. He sent you this leaflet to read when you have time' (assuming you have a leaflet in your hand)."

"When leaving indicate that you will report to Mr. Wheatley."

"Where you have a favourable reception close the interview with, 'Thank you. Mr. Wheatley will be very pleased when I tell him,' or, 'Thank you. Mr. Wheatley told me you were very likely to vote for him.' "

"Where unfavourable, say, 'Mr. Wheatley rather expected you were with him this time. Indeed, you are one of the very few refusals I have had in this street.' (Many electors like to vote with the crowd.) "

"Where doubtful, suggest that 'Mr. Wheatley will call on you if you like. Of course, he is very busy, and may not manage, but if you like, I will ask him.' "

"Keep in touch with doubtful voters, and, where desirable, get other members of the Committee to call and try their powers."

"Do not argue politics overmuch. Talk civilities rather. Five minutes is too short a time in which to make a conversation; it is not too short to make a favourable impression."

"Reason rather than compel. 'Why not give Mr. Wheatley a proper trial in Parliament? He has done extremely well in the short time he has been Minister of Health. Send him back to complete his work.' "

"A good point is that Mr. Wheatley's great work for housing has been interrupted. He has been compelled to lay down his task just before completing it. He must be returned to get his Anti-Profiteering Bill through.'"

"When discussing housing don't denounce a man's abode. He may be proud of it. Rather suggest the factor is charging too much for it. A big supply of 'Wheatley Houses' would bring rents down all round."

"Don't discuss the other candidate if it can be avoided. 'You don't know him at all.' 'Never heard of him before.'"

"Breathe optimism. Meet everybody with smiles. We are sure to increase the majority."

The man who issued these points to his canvassers was not just a self-seeking charlatan. He was of a much higher mental calibre than many of the other Labour politicians. Indeed, John Wheatley (who died in May, 1930), from March, 1927, to a few days before his death, endeavoured to use the House of Commons as a Socialist sounding board. His last two speeches in Parliament were excellent statements of the revolutionary position.

When Ramsay MacDonald formed his first Labour Administration in January, 1924, John Wheatley became a member of the Cabinet as Minister of Health. When the Labour Party returned to office in May, 1929, Wheatley was one of the notable omissions from the Cabinet. He was a trenchant critic of the Labour Government's efforts to deal with the problem of unemployment, and strongly condemned the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1929 on the ground that it did not offer a sufficient standard of maintenance for the unemployed. As Minister of Health he had to attend Buckingham Palace, and, to his credit, unlike Lansbury and MacDonald, he made it a point to enter the King's presence dressed in his customary jacket suit.

Wheatley entertained no illusions as to the purpose of Parliamentarism, and he had the courage to express his thoughts in the matter lucidly. Experience at Westminster inclined him to the opinion that John Most developed in 1874, shortly after he entered the German Parliament as Social Democratic representative for Chemnitz, in Saxony. Most's experience drove him to adopt the anti-Parliamentary outlook, and he fought and suffered for anti-Parliamentarism in consequence in Germany, Britain and America. Describing his impressions and disappointment in an excellent essay, some years later, Most said:—

"The entire law-making—Parliamentarism—is really such a silly, washed-out business that it does not even compare favourably with the most primitive working men's debating clubs, where, Christ knows, enough rubbish is spoken. But the sad thing is that the people in all countries still imagine that by these 'monkey-tricks' their interests are represented and preserved."

Speaking at Cardiff, in May, 1925, John Wheatley said:—

"The country is being driven either to national ruin or bloody revolution. At the present moment workers' representatives are powerless in the House of Commons, and I personally do not treat it very seriously, but regard it as a second or third rate debating society."

Although the workers' representatives were powerless in Parliament to benefit the workers, according to Wheatley they had a definite function to discharge in Parliament and that was to create a bulwark against Socialism and Social Revolution. John Wheatley made this function the theme of his speech in the House of Commons on Tuesday, June 29, 1926, during the Coal Mines Bill debate. Here is an excerpt:—

"I submit that we are drifting towards a state of society in which no people will have an interest in preserving the social order at all. I do not think that any responsible people in any country ever want a revolution. Conditions breed revolution, and the people who produce the conditions are the real revolutionaries. We who ask the Government to realise the danger of the present situation are the bulwark against revolution in the country, and not the people who denounce us as revolutionaries."

Wheatley spoke after actual experience in Westminster, not as a Back-Bencher, but as an occupant of the Treasury Benches. Ramsay MacDonald expressed the same conclusion well in his *Parliament and Revolution*, written in 1920, at a time when he saw no prospect of becoming the first Labour Premier of Great Britain, or a member of the Privy Council. Wrote MacDonald in anticipatory condemnation of his future career:—

> **"When Labour looks to Parliament as the instrument by which its conflicts with capitalism are to be ended, it discovers that Parliament has had neither the knowledge nor the will to perform a task which Labour thinks to be the only one of any importance. . . . Parliament is removed from the urgent social pressure by which Labour is surrounded. . . . The problems and concerns of the House of Commons are quite different from those which are the daily thoughts of ninety per cent. of the people of the country."**

In other words, the workers wield no direct political power through the medium of the capitalist State machine. It is not a question of representation being right or wrong in itself, of voting or not voting. It is one of ineffectual voting, of being solemnly and elaborately deceived. The workers' voice can have no political influence or meaning except during the revolution, and afterwards, in a Soviet Industrial Union or Workers' Industrial Republic. Until then, the would-be representative must consent to be a tool of capitalism. He must resort to vote-catching methods and practise electioneering opportunism. The Wheatley canvassers' circular was no exception to this rule. How could it be? It was a disgrace to Labour and an offence against Wheatley's own integrity. His subsequent excellent speeches in Parliament and his emphatic democratic self-possession in the King's presence failed to remove the blot this circular made on his escutcheon. But the manifesto was Parliamentarism and not Wheatleyism. It was the original sin of Parliamentarism and not the fall from grace of Wheatley that explained the circular.

Against these canvassing methods we set the dignified opinion of Macaulay. He was opposed to canvassing, on the ground that a man who surrendered his vote to caresses and supplication forgot his duty as much as if he sold it for a banknote. Accordingly, in his contest at the General Election that followed the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, he refrained from asking a single elector personally for his vote. He wrote wisely and powerfully:—

> **"The suffrage of an elector ought not to be asked or given as a personal favour. It is as much for the constituents to choose well as it can be for the interests of the candidate to be well chosen. To request an honest man to vote against his conscience is an insult. The practice of canvassing is quite reasonable under a system in which men are sent to Parliament to serve themselves. It is the height of absurdity under a system in which men are sent to Parliament to serve the public."**

But under capitalism, there is no public. And Macaulay sermonised at the beginning of the Parliamentary era, whilst we live at its close. Practical politicians view such nicety of scruple as a quaint conceit to be put aside ruthlessly as having no connection with the all-important question of success at the ballot-box. Macaulay's ethic may have suited the refined understanding of John Stuart Mill, who was a conspicuous failure as a Parliamentarian, because, as Mill's admirer but impatient critic, John Bright, explained by setting up to be a thinker, he thought himself out of politics altogether. But Parliamentarians, from William Ewart Gladstone to John Wheatley, have a very different outlook from Macaulay, and unite to pour scorn on such a "poor fish" philosophy.

Gladstone understood Parliamentarism, and is its outstanding representative. He had no small sympathy with boroughmongering at the commencement of his political career, and no little sensitiveness of response to the growing power of the working-class movement during the course and towards the close of his career. He evolved the Parliamentary method of corrupting and undermining the Labour movement and averting social conflict by honouring the biggest rat. Gladstone recognised that electioneering was an essential feature of Parliamentarism and endowed its practice. Like Macaulay, he was a candidate in the General Election that followed the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832. He stood for Newark. There were 2,000 houses in the burgh, and he visited each of them five times. As a result of these 10,000 visits he was duly elected. And what was the purpose of those visits? What is the purpose of all electioneering?

One night, in the smoking-room of the House of Commons, Disraeli said to John Bright:—"You know, Bright, what you and I come here for—we both come here for fame."

And fame means ease, affluence.

III. Parliamentarism: Its Rise and Failure

It may be that fame was desired for its own sake by both Disraeli and Bright. With the average Labour leader it is otherwise. He has no stake in the country, and he weds a political career in order to obtain that which no member of his class obtains by economic right under capitalism, the right to joy and indulgence. Writing in 1925, one hundred years after the final repeal of the Combination Acts of 1799—1825, George Lansbury confessed that this was the position. He explained that Parliamentarism and its resulting fame meant the corruption of Labour—a truth anti-Parliamentarians expressed often without requiring to travel to Westminster to discover. Lansbury published his confession in *Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, for June 6, 1925. It read as follows:—

"When J. H. Thomas says he belongs to no class, he is talking nonsense, because he knows, nobody better, that if he were a cleaner, stoker or driver on a railway engine he would not be permitted to call dukes, earls, and others by their Christian names, or be a guest at their private dinner tables, except on some extraordinary occasion. Those of us who are invited to attend Royal garden parties and other social functions of the rich are invited because we are now supposed to have risen superior to our fellows. J. H. Thomas, as a workman on the railway, is of no particular importance; as the spokesman elected by his class to speak for them he is an important person, whose company is cultivated in such a manner as will make him accept the belief that, having risen from humble rank, he is of no class. Yet he is now one of the ruling class. . . .

"The British governing class is the most plausible and clever in all the world They know, none better, from the King on the throne down to the poorest Tory or Liberal Mayor, how to stoop to conquer, and are up to every move to prevent leaders of the people remaining class-conscious."

If we consider the terrible period of struggle and mockery of misery the rise of the Labour Government of 1924 had rounded off, and the disastrous situation when Lansbury published his very true commentary, the force of which he no longer realises, we shall understand better the hopeless farce of Parliamentarism. If only those festive workers who pioneered the organisation of the working class away back in 1750 could see the result of their first associations, what would they think? In their humble way they pioneered two vested interests—the Breweries and Parliamentarism. They pioneered a third thing—association and the workers' desire to struggle.

The history of organised Labour begins in the 18th century public-house. No visions of Labour Premiers inspired the workers who foregathered in the Masons' Arms, the Bricklayers' Arms, the Blacksmiths' Arms, the Three Jolly Painters, etc. How many of those workers who vote for the Labour Right Honorables and take their drink in the Bricklayers' Arms realise that they are celebrating a double degeneracy? In the instance cited the social meeting of the craftsmen in their "Trade Club" or "Union" named the public-house. In other instances the public-house named the "club" as in the case of the Crown Coachmakers, the Globe Coachmakers, the Phoenix Painters, the Running Horse Carpenters, the Marquis of Granby Carpenters. These festive societies gloried in beer-drinking and the art of initiating apprentices by grotesque ceremonies and weird incantations. The purpose of these imbecilities was the quite practical one of protecting the craft against strangers from other towns. Not much promise of an International Working Men's Association or of the workers' desire for world emancipation is foreshadowed by such proceedings. But from these associations did develop the idea of the workers' world emancipation and brotherhood and also the practical organisation of a contrary nature mocking this ideal, the vast Labour ramification of later Capitalist Imperialism through the organisation of the Trade Union and Labour Parliamentarism. Slow changes are recorded in the early minute books of the associations and we witness the rise of real unions. The saloon atmosphere merges into that of the Committee Room. Records of penny fines for swearing or for drunkenness on the part of members give place to accounts of money being voted to the "turn-outs," that is, the strikers. The import of this change was not really understood even by the apologists for the Combination Act. These worthies of reaction discovered no minutes in the somewhat brawling association of the Marquis of Granby's Carpenters' Society. But the menace was there, and the menace finally made history.

Since the workers of this period were handicraftsmen, they lacked the knowledge and experience of industrial organisation. Their protests had to be the protests of opinion, that is, political and without the backing of industrial action. They had to make their voice heard through such mediums at the London Corresponding Society. This now despised organisation educated the workers in the principles of Paine's *Rights of Man*, and so actually pioneered all later Socialist thought. The ramifications of this society and similar organisations furthering like progressive ends, were very feeble. Despite the magnificent courage of Richard Carlile and his immortal shopmen and shopwomen, these organisations collapsed beneath the persecutions of Castlereagh, Pitt, and Sidmouth. Shelley's call to the men of England and Byron's magnificent apology for the Luddites passed into history. Machinery triumphed. Factories replaced fields and the cause which Castlereagh had seemed to strangle rose again in the renewed vigour in a new industrial atmosphere.

From 1825 to 1832, when the Reform Bill was passed, the Proletariat now in actual existence still followed middle-class leaders. Their political consciousness had not yet evolved the idea of Labour representation at Westminster. The Reform Act enfranchised the middle-class and excluded the workers from th ballot-box. Lord John Russell, the great Unitarian Prime Minister, became known as

"Finality Jack" because he declared, with a folly peculiar to statesmen, that there would be no extension of the franchise. How strange that reads to-day to those of us who know that it has been the extension of the franchise that has virtually disfranchised the working class. But for the extension of the ballot-box there would have been no Labour represenation at Westminster, no reform programmes, no betrayals, but merely the direct struggle for Revolution.

From 1832 to 1835, the working class protest against disfranchisement was industrial. The British workers entertained ideas of a Soviet Republic and knew exactly what they wanted. The Builders' Union was formed in the very year that witnessed the passage into law of the Reform Bill. The Builders' avowed object was the Social Revolution, and a year later it became prominent by its activities. It subscribed to the message urged by Robert Owen, who maintained that capitalist competition had ruined the workers, and that the only way out was to take over industry and run it on a co-operative basis. The Unions were to set up guilds and producers who would strike in each industry for an eight hours day and control of the job. This would force the capitalists and absorb his business in the guild.

In January, 1834, this programme was adopted by the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union. This Union proposed to replace the House of Commons by a Workers' Industrial Administration, which was actually a Soviet system of society. For their association with this activity the famous Dorchester labourers were arrested and deported. The Union was broken by persecution and the employers throughout the country compelled the workers to sign the infamous "renunciation" of Unionism. By January, 1835, Unionism had collapsed and the Grand National Consolidated was a memory. The idea of emancipation remained and the workers turned from direct action to political or parliamentary action. Sovietism was replaced by Chartism.

In London, one of the many Radical Clubs, called the London Working Men's Association, headed by Lovett, propounded the six points of the famous charter. To the surprise of the London radicals the working men of the Black Country throughout England and Scotland rallied to the cry, and Chartism, with its tremendous Socialist propaganda preached by men like Ernest Jones, took the country by storm. The flame of Chartism survived till the year 1850 when its Great Petition fiasco ended the movement in laughter and scorn. Failure did not dishearten the workers. Just as they turned from industrial to political action in 1835, so, on a larger scale, they reverted to industrial action. Trades Unionism now determined that the workers should move along the quiet paths of industrial negotiation and peace, with the strike threat as a menace rather than the strike itself.. The cry of "No Politics in the Union" replaced the Chartist agitation which had urged avowed insurrection in the event of political reform being denied. The peaceful slogan of "A Fair Day's Work and a Fair Day's Pay" was developed. Economic circumstances favoured this development down to 1867 when once again a crisis compelled the workers to demand a Commission of Inquiry and to turn to legal and political action. In 1867, the Master and Servant Act placed masters and workers on an equal footing in the case of a breach of contract. Five years later the Unions were given legal status and thir funds protected. Another four years saw picketing legalised. The year

before this occurred, 1874, the Trades Councils and the Trade Union Congress sanctioned the first two Labour members, who, in 1874, with great diffidence, carried the Labour standard into the House of Commons. This brings us to the threshold of the eighties when the modern Social Democratic Movement was developed fully in Britain. Into the history of that movement we need not go in the present pamphlet.

As pointed out in our last chapter, 1874, the year that witnessed the return of the first two Labour members to the House of Commons, was the very year that actual acquaintance with the German Parliament convinced John Most that Parliamentarism was a silly business. This was also the very year that William Leibknecht, the father of the immortal Karl Leibknecht, and himself an ex-prisoner and exile for Revolutionary Socialism, had corrupted and negated Socialism for Parliamentarism. The same William Leibknecht wrote:—

"On the ground of the class struggle, we are invincible. If we leave it we are lost, because we are no longer Socialists. The strength and power of Socialism rests in the fact that we are leading a class struggle; that the labouring class is exploited and oppressed by the capitalist class, and that within capitalist society effectual reforms, which will put an end to class government and class exploitation are impossible."

For these very powerful reasons a Parliamentarian cannot be a Socialist. John Burns, M.P., a very different person from the same John Burns as unemployed leader, was looked at askance at the Labour Party Conference in 1900, when he declared that he was tired of working class boots, working class houses, working class trains, and working class margarine. He anticipated the feeling of Labour Parliamentarism by a quarter of a century. The art of Parliamentarism is the art of growing tired of working class struggle, working class experience, the politics of working class emancipation. Parliamentarism is impossible, because no man nor woman can serve two masters.

W. Leibknecht put the case very well this same year of 1874, when he said:—

"Every attempt at action in Parliament, every effort to help in the work of legislation, necessitates some abandonment of our principles, deposits us upon the slope of compromise and of political give and take, till at last we find ourselves in the treacherous bog of Parliamentarism, which, by its foulness, kills everything that is healthy."

"Socialism is no longer a matter of theory but a burning question which must be settled, not in Parliament, but in the street and on the battlefield, like every other burning question."

Leibknecht wrote this at the beginning of the Parliamentary Socialist epoch. Philip Snowden wrote to the same effect towards its close, at a time when Parliamentarism was passing in every country in Europe, and he himself had enjoyed position as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Britain's first Labour Government. Writing in *Reynold's Illustrated News* for August 19, 1928, Snowden urged that the road to Socialism lay through capitalist organisation, the industrial development of capitalism to transition and breakdown. This may well be true and it may mean that even Fascism cannot avert the Social Revolution. Not for this argument is his article remarkable, but for his confession that Parliamentarism is anti-Socialism. Snowden's confession merits reproduction in full. It reads as follows:—

"I sometimes feel inclined to give up Parliament and active political work and devote myself once more to Socialist propaganda. After I entered the House of Commons I tried for a time to combine the discussion of current political issues with the exposition of Socialist aims and ideals. But I found it to be an impossible task.

"When a person is engaged in Parliamentary work and political controversy, he cannot always choose the subjects of his public speeches. The political issues

which interests the public at the moment are often made by his political opponents, and he is compelled to follow their lead. A party which is seeking political power must devote itself, in the main, to the discussion of current political questions. There is no time for the education of the public in fundamental principles.

"The consequence is that the public do not get an understanding of the relation of particular proposals to a complete and comprehensive plan of Industrial and social reconstruction.

"I mark the beginning of the decline of definite Socialist propaganda in this country from the time when the Labour Party came into Parliament in considerable numbers in 1906. The men who had been Socialist propagandists became politicians. It is no reproach to them. It could not be otherwise. Parliamentary work and political controversy are so absorbing that Socialist members of Parliament have no time left for general Socialist propaganda.

"And this does not apply to individuals only. It is equally true of organisations. The Independent Labour Party, which did such magnificent educational work for Socialism before 1906, long ago ceased to be a Socialist propaganda body. If a young man of ability, fired with the zeal and idealism of Socialism, arises from its ranks, he is at once made into a Parliamentary candidate, and he is changed from the Socialist evangelist to the party politician. . . .

"But the most serious aspect of this matter is that the younger generation of the Labour movement have no real understanding of Socialism. They have been fed on political propaganda and not on Socialist principles. The 'Socialism in Our Time' programme of the I.L.P. has no more relation to Socialism than it has to the man in the moon. Its proposals of a livtng wage, family endowment, and the like, are just a revival of the paternal Toryism of Lord Shaftesbury and Disraeli."

William Leibknecht depicted Parliamentary activity as the abandonment of Socialism before the modern Social Democratic movement had engaged in the work of capitalist legislation. Snowden confessed to the same effect, and with great wealth of detail, after he had enjoyed considerable experience as a Parliamentarian, first in Opposition, and then as a member of the Cabinet. A glimpse, apparently, since he afterwards joined the Cabinet, a very transient glimpse, of the same truth inspired the comment Thomas Johnston contributed to *Forward*, for July 7, 1923, on Wheatley and the other suspended members:—

"If the allegations are not withdrawn, our suspended comrades will be outside Parliament to the end of the session, which, I understand, means next February; but, if so, they will be free to engage in the propaganda for Socialism; and it seems to me as if an intensification of that propaganda would do no harm.

"We are as a Party, becoming obsessed with the idea that the next General Election will see us in power. To get that power we must not scare anybody —especially the middle-class voter. Anything in the cargo we carry likely to frighten off a sympathetic bourgeois must be jettisoned; the sturmtruppen must be hidden away with camp followers :n the rear; the host that is to march forward to the destruction of capitalism is to be disguised as voluntary welfare workers with elastic-sided boots out for an excursion; we are to promise to do nobody any harm; every change is to be so gradual that no exploiter need be unduly worried; the kingdom of man is to come by stealth.

"Power got without a politically educated working class, in active and intelligent support behind us, would be power that would last a fortnight; and unless we go ahead creating Socialist opinion, and not merely an opinion that we are tame and harmless substitutes for the old Liberal Party, we shall only get office and not power. And office without power to do anything with it means disaster.

"The tendency is so obvious that already the writers to the Sunday Press are asking what the Duke of Northumberland is worrying about the Labour Party for. . . .

"The moral of which is that a Labour Government in office will be able to go only so far as its supporters in the country have vision and determination, and that the mere securing of office without a great Socialist backing spells in reality defeat."

Quite so; that is why anti-Parliamentarians concentrate on making a Socialist proletariat; that is why we prefer the street-corners to the comfortable atmosphere of St. Stephen's; that is why anti-Parliamentarism is right.

Let agitation acquaint the workers with anti-Parliamentary thought and they think in the terms of the Socialist Commonwealth, they stand for the direct enfranchisement of industry, for immediate working class society, a true golden age.

But let the agitation be Parliamentarian, and the workers have no other notion than that of state pauperism, the direct enfranchisement of a Labour bureaucracy to administer capitalism and preserve its authority by a system of doles, the real servitude of the workers to an age of gold.

Parliamentarism can never give the workers control of industry, can never solve the problem of capitalism, can never secure to the wealth-producers the ownership by themselves of the means of production and distribution.

Access to the means of life proceeds from direct action. A class-conscious proletariat will emancipate itself by spontaneous action. A consciousless proletariat will tolerate Parliamentarism because of its consciouslessness, because it lacks initiative, and can never be emancipated.

Labour Parliamentarism is but the shadow and not the substance of working class emancipation. It is the shadow that masquerades as the body and sets up in opposition to the body, proclaiming the body to be the shadow. No one knows this better than the Parliamentarians themselves.

By electing to go to Parliament, these Labour climbers elect not to be class conscious. Labourism is not Socialism, and was never intended to be other than a substitution for Socialism, a negation of Socialism. Parliamentarians are not Socialists, but politicians. Labourists they may style themselves, but Labourism is only a particular phase of capitalist legislation and palliation. A Parliamentarian has no principles, and but one purpose: to oust from fame and office another Parliamentarian, and so attain place and distinction. Under capitalism all men and women are governed by the job-idea. We seek distinction not from the greatness of the service we render but from the importance of the position we enjoy. We are greater because of the honour we receive than on account of the work we perform. This is the Parliamentary idea, the true reflex of capitalist conditions of production and distribution. Hence a Parliamentarian can never be a pioneer. So much is evident from a study of the Wheatley canvassing circular and from the career of Wheatley himself. When the man would be honest he passed into obscurity and proved a failure.

IV. Labour in the Parliamentary Coach

Writing in the Glasgow *Worker*, for November 5, 1922, John S. Clarke declared: "Yes! if anything on God's earth is calculated to prolong the capitalist system, it is surely a Labour Government." To the same effect, although uttered in the opposite interest, are the shrewd words of Sir William Meyer applauding Parliamentarism. "Men who can be persuaded to get into a coach do not try to upset it once they are in."

At a later date, when functioning as a Labour M.P., it was to the immediate interest of Clarke to query the truth of his previous assertion. Facts establish its accuracy and show that Clarke foresaw from very clear understanding and visioned with uncanny wisdom. Labour Parliamentarism was destined to prolong the agony of capitalism because of the anxiety of the Labour M.P.'s to ride *in state* in the Parliamentary coach.

Consider the facts. Long before there was any hope of a Labour Government being organised, the Labour Parliamentarians were expressing an overwhelming zeal for riding in the State Coach. The *Daily Telegraph*, for February 15, 1918, nine months before the capitalist Great War concluded, describes the visit paid by the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales and Princess Mary, to view the bronze panel being presented by the British Trade Union Congress to the American Federation of Labour. Here is the essential passages of the report:—

"Mr. C. W. Bowerman, Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee, standing near the King, pointed out the inscription recording that the panel was given 'With fraternal greetings from the organised workers of Great Britain to the organised workers of America.'

"'That is very appropriate,' said the King, 'and I see that there follow the names of the members of the committee. That, I think, is a very good idea. By the way, do you know Mr. Gompers, and does he sometimes come here?'

"Mr. Bowerman replied that they all knew of Mr. Gompers, the Labour leader in America, and British Labour was proud to know that he was a native of these islands.

"'At all events, he appears to be a very remarkable and a very capable man,' said His Majesty.

"Mr. Will Thorne was compelled to make a departure from custom by leaving in advance of the King and Queen, being about to start for France. The Prince of Wales was greatly amused when he excused himself in characteristic fashion by saying: 'I must now be off to sing "The Red Flag."'

"Loud cheers were raised by the crowd outside when the King and Queen left. Various members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress afterwards observed that they were particularly impressed by the evidences of sympathy and good feeling towards Labour exhibited by the Prince and Princess, as well as by the King and Queen."

Four years later the War had passed. It was no longer Militarist Labour that was in the ascendant but the Wartime Pacifist element, with the militarist faction playing second fiddle. Labourist snobbery remained unaltered. Parliamentarism, whether avowedly militarist or sometime pacifist, pursued the same lickspittle policy.

At Princess Mary's wedding on February 28th, 1922, at Westminster Abbey, among 2,000 selected persons admitted to the Abbey were the following "lights of Labourism":—

J. H. Thomas, M.P., and Mrs. Thomas.
J. R. Clynes, M.P., and Mrs. Clynes
C. W. Bowerman, M.P., and Mrs. Bowerman.
Harry Gosling, later M.P. for Whitechapel.
John Hodge, M.P., who had risen from being a steel smelter to the Privy Council by supporting Keir Hardie's Labourism.
Arthur Henderson, M.P., of "doormat" fame.

When the King and Queen dined with Viscount and Viscountess Astor at Lord Astor's residence, No. 4 St. James's Square, on Thursday, March 8th, 1923, the guests included several prominent Labour members and their wives.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Thomas were there, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Clynes, and Mr. and Mrs. Philip Snowden.

Members of all political parties were represented, and those received by Lady Astor besides the Royal entourage included:—The United States Ambassador, the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, the Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury, the Earl of Balfour, Lady Frances Balfour, the Earl and Countess of Kerry, Viscount and Viscountess Milnes, Viscount and Viscountess Grey of Falloden, Lord and Lady Islington, Lord Robert Cecil, Sir John and Lady Simon, and the High Commissioner for Canada.

The Queen wore a dress of eau de nil with diamond ornament, and Viscountess Astor a dress of old gold with diamond ornaments, including a very fine tiara.

Next morning the press was able to announce that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald (Leader of the Labour Opposition) had accepted an invitation to dine with the King and Queen at Buckingham Palace on the Thursday morning.

So bad did this evil become, that W. H. Thompson, the well-known Labour lawyer and conscientious objector, wrote in the *Daily Herald* for January 9, 1924, as follows:—

"SOCIALIST DEBUTANTES!

"According to an evening paper the other night the wife of one of the leaders of the Labour Party is reported to have said that she did not know whether or not any Socialist debutantes would be presented at the Court in the coming season, but that it would be 'very possible.' 'And why not?' she is reported to have said.

"Now, these things in essence are trivial, but is there to be any limit? Perhaps it will be daughter of an unemployed ex-Serviceman who will be presented in rags: if so, at which Court—Buckingham Palace or Bow Street? It is impossible to write more about such humbug and preserve ordinary decency, so I will stop; but whither are we going?"

As we have seen, this obsequiousness did not begin with Labour's elevation to the place of official Opposition. It characterised it long before. It constitutes the whole art of Parliamentarism. Writes Thomas Johnston, not then a Rt. Honorable, in *Forward*, for August 9, 1919:—

"The average Socialist spits on the ground and crosses himself when he thinks about the Parliamentary Labour Party. In the workshops he has to defend his inactivity and its slackness; he is continually explaining why its attendances at important divisions is unsatisfactory. . . . And now they have stopped doing nothing; they are awake, earnest, determined, intent upon striking a deadly blow. They have decreed it to be a test upon the officials of the party, that if a half-drunk Tory gets up to hiccough 'God Save the King,' the officials of the Party must rise and sing too. . . .

"Neil MacLean's conduct has been reprobated; he is not to be compelled to resign for refusing to chant an ode to Buckingham Palace, but the Party, in solemn conclave assembled, has decided to repudiate his lack of reverence to the corner stone of the aristocratic edifice. Seven Labour members of Parliament refused to support the motion asking Mr. MacLean to resign. . . . All honour to them, but they were only seven. . . .

"The spectacle of Jack Jones, the Tower Hill orator, moving disapproval, but not compulsory resignation, is a theme for the moving-picture theatre."

Elevation to the Treasury Benches did not, of course, in any way decline or alleviate this despicable snobbery and unprincipled toadyism. It is noticeable that Neil MacLean, in every way as astute and as time-serving as any of the Labourist members, received no place in the MacDonald Ministry. This indiscretion, calculated to secure his continued return for Govan, was not forgotten in circles where such conduct gives birth to irritation and resentment. MacDonald's *public* does *not* belong to Govan. Hence the discrepancy of political interest between Neil and Ramsay!

Ramsay MacDonald became the first "Labour" Premier of Great Britain, and formed his administration of Pale Pinks, in place without power, on January 22, 1924. The contemporary record of the event reads like a changing of the guard! It forecasted, this association of the Baldwins and the MacDonalds, if one had read correctly between the lines, the coming of the National Government seven years later. From the capitalist daily press we excerpt the following:—

"Miss MacDonald was welcomed to Number 10 Downing Street by Mrs. Stanley Baldwin."

Following which precious announcement the Court Circular kept us keenly alive to the significance of the Labour triumph!

SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENT.

We make two excerpts from the columns of the *Daily Record* for January 2, 1924:—

> **"The Prince of Wales and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, sat side by side and chatted animatedly at the Pilgrims' Dinner in London last night to the new American Ambassador. . . . The mention of the Prime Minister's name evoked a storm of cheers. . . . Mr. MacDonald said . . . The relations between the United States and Great Britain . . . were never better. . . . I pray to God that they will long continue in that happy condition. . . We have had our quarrels—as all happy families have had—we have disagreed, as all friends have disagreed. But when any great human cause has come before us, in the natural fitness of things we have looked into our hearts."**
>
> **"Socialism, proudly penurious, is to appear at Royal Levees in ordinary evening coat, black knee breeches and silk stockings, w th not a scrap of the gold braid which made the old Court dress so magnificent—and so expensive."**

But "Socialism" wore the gold braid just the same, and a bonnie sight Labourism in gold braid proved to be! And a bonnie mess it made of the Labour struggle!

All of which reminds us of what happened when Joseph Chamberlain entered the House of Commons in 1876. Parliamentarism turned Chamberlain from a Radical and a Republican to a Monarchist and an Imperialist. His imperialist traditions have been continued in our time by his son, Austen Chamberlain, who became a member of Ramsay MacDonald's National Government after serving in Conservative Cabinets. Joseph Chamberlain identified himself with the ardent Republicanism of Sir Charles Dilke, and in after years their record of Republican utterances proved somewhat embarrassing to both. Queen Victoria shrewdly and jokingly explained Dilke's Republicanism by saying that, when he was a little boy, she remembered having stroked his hair, and she supposed she had stroked it the wrong way. As a matter of fact, many Republicans, and certainly many Socialists, are people whose heads have been stroked the wrong way by circumstance. They have been born in poverty and they resent the fact, not of poverty itself, but of their personal experience of it. When Parliamentarism offers them the way out they accept it and so leave their unfortunate fellows in the poverty to which they have been born and which the Parliamentarians accept as the lot of those who cannot scramble out of the gutter of misery.

Five years before Chamberlain was returned to Parliament, Dilke had attacked the Monarchy in a powerful speech at Newcastle and concluded:—

> **"If you can show me a fair chance that a Republic here will be free from the political corruption that hangs about the Monarchy, I say, for my part—and I believe that the middle classes in general will say—let it come!"**

Chamberlain announced that he had read this speech "with interest and agreement." He added:—

> **"The Republic must come, and, at the rate at which we are moving it will come in our generation."**

When Dilke took office under Gladstone in 1880, he explained to Queen Victoria that these Republican views "did not affect the old-established Monarchies, but only new States, like those in America, or like France, where there was no longer anyone to look to." He reassured Granville, intending it to be reported to the Queen, that he was loyal and respected the constitutional behaviour of "the illustrious occupant of the Throne." Two years later he was President at the Local Government Board and a Cabinet Minister, and he deemed it wise to make a further recantation. He swallowed his Republican-

ism for Parliamentarism and the emoluments of office. This is what he said:—

"There were opinions of political infancy which, as one grew older, one might regard as unwise or might prefer not to have uttered."

When Leibknecht was organising the Parliamentary Socialist debacle in Germany, when John Most was repenting being the M.P. for Chemnitz, when British Trade Unionism was deciding to engage in Labour Parliamentarism, in the November of that eventful year, 1874, Joseph Chamberlain, as Mayor of Birmingham, was anticipating his own return to Parliament and entertaining the then Prince and Princess of Wales at a civic luncheon. The papers reported that the Mayor's speeches were "couched in a tone of courteous homage, manly independence and gentlemanly feeling." *Punch* sarcastically commented on the taming of Joseph Chamberlain in the following lines:—

"Republican Mr. Chamberlain, the Mayor of the City of Hardware,
Like a gentleman he comported himself in this glare of the Princely sun:
He said just what he ought to have said, and he did what he ought to have done:
He put his red cap in his pocket and sat on his Fortnightly article,
And of Red Republican claws and teeth displayed not so much as a particle."

Twenty-two years later the Prince was dining with W. T. Stead and Lady Warwick. He recalled the Birmingham visit and said of Joseph Chamberlain:—

"I remember him when I went down to Birmingham: he was then Mayor and a terrific Socialist: quite the kind of man whom, if you mentioned his name at a dinner-table, it was like as if you talked of Tom Mann or someone like that. Yes, but he was very nice, and we got on very well: they think no end of him at Birmingham."

When Chamberlain took office in 1880, Gladstone apologised to the Queen for his Republicanism. Four years later, Her Majesty found Mr. Chamberlain "very sensible and very reasonable about the question of Egypt." She added: "I think him decidedly pleasant and more unobtrusive in manner than Sir Charles Dilke."

John Burns, the Man with the Red Flag, continued the recantation tradition, through Parliamentary influence and contact with the Monarchy, of Chamberlain and Dilke. Ramsay MacDonald completed the story by gathering together the associates or immediate successors of Chamberlain and Burns into one Ministry. He has made one bundle of the Parliamentary recantations, possibly in order that they might suffer a common destruction.

How the son of the Prince, who found Republican Chamberlain "very nice" at Birmingham at the beginning of the modern Parliamentary era, received the Socialist ministers in 1924, is described in *Orient Observer* for June, 1920, beneath the captions:

"KING GEORGE AND HIS SOCIALIST MINISTERS.
"ARTISANS AT COURT.
"By a Court Official."

This article congratulated the King on his "social adaptability" and tact, and explained that "whereas the Government of to-day may be in the hands of erstwhile miners, railwaymen, artisans and clerks of every conceivable description, the Government of to-morrow is just as

likely to be—as it was uninterruptedly through centuries of British history—representative of the old aristocracy with a strong admixture of the commercial supermen who control "Big Business'."

In other words, Parliamentarism means the undisturbed continuation of the capitalist system. Ramsay MacDonald subscribed to the same idea. Writing in the *New Leader* for January, 1924, he predicted "*a century in which no great social changes would occur,*" and spoke of the Tories being sent for by the King should a Labour Government be defeated, "*especially if the outgoing Prime Minister were to advise it* !"

This means that MacDonald's cure for the Social tragedy at the very commencement of his career as Labour Premier, was a perpetual game of ins and out, continued class society, continued poverty, continued parley. This also foreshadowed his Baldwin association.

The *Orient Observer* article depicted the press speculations at the time of the first "Socialist" Administration, as to how the new Ministers, being

"completely foreign to social usages outside the limited ambit of the workman's life, would figure in the dazzling glare of Court routine. Amusing jests were made regarding the transition from corduroy trousers to black silk knee-breeches and gorgeously braided uniform trousers. Only those who were behind the scenes will ever thoroughly appreciate how much King George was responsible for putting the new Ministers at ease. He was blind to minor breaches of etiquette, and appeared to be wholly oblivious to the fact if a ceremonial sword was on the wrong side of its flustered Ministerial wearer."

The writer explained that the King made a special point of knowing as much as possible about the Labour Ministers before he met them.

"Thus more than one member of the Labour Government of 1924 was agreeably surprised at the extent of the knowledge which the King had of them—even in their hobbies. . . . before long, what the Minister had visualised as a somewhat trying interview became a pleasure, giving conversation of the kind only possible to two men who know their subjects. . . .

"Perhaps the greatest tribute which could be paid to the far-seeing understanding of the British Monarch is the fact that a former Socialist Minister, who had spent his life in stressing the sins and callous indifference of the 'idle rich,' now numbers amongst his most cherished possessions a signed photograph, which the King presented to him. . . .

"For those who only see an enigma in the fact that Socialist Ministers can work in harmony with an hereditary monarch, the solution is contained in the words of a Minister well known for his rebellious utterances of other days. Referring to King George, he said, 'He's a good sort.'

"No more need be said."

Two very different Socialist writers have explained why the Labour Parliamentarians adapted themselves so well to the interests of the British Monarchy. Daniel De Leon, appealing to Roman History, discovers the explanation in the fact that the word "Labour" clings to certain politicians long after their interests have ceased to be identical with those of the class from which they migrated. De Leon says:—

"The common designation of 'Labour' that clings to the labour leader, and which he is zealous to cultivate, does for the labour leader what the common designation of 'plebeian' did for the plebs leader; it covers him, along with the toiling and the fleeced wage slaves in the shops, mills and yards, placing him before these in the light of 'fellow working-man.' In this instance, as in that of the plebs leaders, the people—capitalists as well as proletarians—generally fall victim to the delusion, a delusion that, just as in the instance of the plebs leader, the labour leader alone remains free from. Accordingly, in this instance, as in that of the plebs leader, the common delusion arms the labour leader with the club wherewith to wrench from the capitalist class safety for HIMSELF."

E. Belfort Bax, the colleague of William Morris in the old Socialist League, and, despite his ridiculous anti-feminism and his later pro-war tendencies, one of the most scholarly of the Socialist writers, in his excellent work on *The French Revolution*, chapter 4, concludes:—

"Another point to note is the untrustworthiness of men who belong to the class which makes the Revolution, and who even profess to represent it, when their personal interests and position are bound up with the maintenance of the existing order. Flesselles, an official of the Third Estate, its leading dignitary in the City of Paris, was yet the man who was the least anxious to see the feudal hierarchy overthrown. And why? Because he played a part in it. The Third Estate had been incorporated into the medieval system. He was its representative as one of the feudal orders. Its position was subordinate indeed, but now that it was growing in importance, its leading men had much more to gain by clinging to the skirts of the *Noblesse*, and aiding them in frustrating that complete Revolution which the rank and file were seeking, than in assisting the accomplishment of this Revolution, which could only mean the effacement of their own personal position. History repeats itself. Trade Unions have won for themselves recognition and patronage in the middle class world to-day. Their leaders, in a similar way do not exhibit any special desire for a change which though it would mean the liberation and triumph of the class they represent, would at the same time render Trade Unions a thing of the past, no less than the Lord Mayors and Cabinet Ministers who stroke the backs of the Parliamentary elect of Trade Unions."

V. Foreign Policy and High Finance

The previous chapter contains a report of Ramsay MacDonald's speech at the Pilgrims Dinner in London, when he sat side by side with the Prince of Wales and the American Ambassador. MacDonald's speech was a magnificent study in ruling class cant and the parliamentary negation of all Socialist sentiment. MacDonald was paying courtier to the Gods of Finance as well as to the cause of royalty. He was giving ironic point to a passage he wrote in "Forward" for November 13, 1920:—

"On our knees, by the graves of the Dardanelles, let us pay homage to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords—High Finance."

And so, in July, 1924, the capitalist press treated us to pictures of Ramsay MacDonald and Kellog, the American Ambassador, standing together, in company with other interested "statesmen" on the steps of the Foreign Office, at the close of the opening session of the conference on German Reparations. America had become what Britain once was—the world's manufacturer, merchant, shipper, and banker. As President Harding informed a group of American manufacturers and bankers on May 24, 1921, the United States was the great creditor-nation of the world. Which explains why and how the Dawes-Young Report came into being, and "Labour" Premier MacDonald celebrated the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the world-war by imposing that report on Europe. In Mexico, the British Shell Oil and the American Standard Oil combined their interests and declined to recognise the "Labour Government of Obregon." Accordingly, Ramsay MacDonald bowed before the oil interests of Lord Cowdray and severed all official relations with the Mexican Government, because of its semi-Labour character, and its nationalisation of property, claimed by representatives of the alien exploiters of Mexico's oilfields.

Capitalist foreign policy continued unaltered, as every student of politics knew it would; social-toadyism flourished as well as ever. Labourism not only maintained but entrenched all three expressions of social viciousness.

The *Glasgow Herald*, in its issue for Monday, October 22, 1923, under the heading "Labour and Foreign Policy," reviewed Ramsay MacDonald's then recent utterances concerning the objectives of the I.L.P. foreign policy in the event of its succession to office. The Glasgow organ of capitalist "high finance" concluded:—

"Continuity of foreign policy has always been one of the distinguishing features and chief safeguards of Britain. A certain change of emphasis might be perceptible during the successive changes of the administration from Conservative or Unionist to Liberal, or from Liberal to Coalition. But it was more imaginary than real. From the time of Walpole to that of Lord Curzon, British foreign policy has developed on a consistent line of its own, independently of the struggles of parties and the fluctuations in domestic policy. Successive Oppositions might criticise the foreign policy of the Government, but when they themselves came into power they found themselves heirs to a policy which they were incapable of altering to any material extent, since it was based upon the needs of national security and upon a multitude of external factors which Britain might influence but could not control. . . . Broadly speaking, the main 'objectives' of Labour in regard to foreign policy are identical with those of the present Government."

J. R. Clynes, as deputy-leader of the Labour Party, anticipating office, endorsed this view of the *Glasgow Herald* when he wrote in the *Daily Herald* for March 16, 1923:—

"There is far less difference between the parties behind the Government and the parties opposed to the Government than there ever has been on foreign affairs in recent years. In that we have come nearer to national unity."

The previous year Clynes had also laboured to reassure capitalist interests that they had nothing to fear from Labour parliamentarism. Speaking at the end of January, 1922, before the Imperial Commercial Association, at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, Clynes declared that "Labour had no designs upon private enterprise." At this dinner Clynes found himself in the congenial company of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Sir Lynden Macasey, Lord Ashfield, and the chairmen of several banks and commercial trading associations. He warmed to his company and insisted that the Labour Party tried to compose and not to aggravate or to extend trade disputes.

He spoke with heat, to the same effect, a week later at Berkhampstead (Saturday, Feb. 4, 1923), in reply to Lord Birkenhead, repudiating the then Lord Chancellor's strictures on the Labour Party.

Fourteen days later, *John Bull* published from the pen of J. R. Clynes an article on "How Labour Would Govern," in which the same note is struck. In this, he prophetically and pathetically declared that "no rash innovations" would be introduced by him or his party. "Some," he added,

"are alarmed by the cry that the Labour Party would be pushed and terrorised by extremists, and would be unable to carry out a policy of its own. . . . How preposterous such a fear is! . . . Precedent has already been established in the matter of bringing from outside the service of great organisers and business men whose value to the State everyone must recognise . . . If in any elected majority men were not included who possessed the required legal standing the attractions of the positions would evoke many offers of service."

That this perpetuation of capitalism was the settled policy of the Labour Government is clear from the letter published by a Labour backbencher in the *Daily Herald* for Thursday, December 27, 1923:—

"WARNING TO SMALL INVESTORS.

"The manipulators of the Stock Exchange are trying to frighten small investors into a panic for an all-sufficient and sinister reason.

"By creating a fear of a Labour Government and inducing investors to throw their stocks on the market, prices will slump, and the well-to-do will buy good investments at low prices. After this is done it will be shown that the fears were groundless, and the prices will go up again, and the manipulators will unload. The small investor will be robbed, not by the Labour Government, but by the financial tricksters.

"Investors in good securities should sit tight and not sell. After six months of Labour rule, sound (not watered) securities should be more valuable. The financiers know this, hence their attempt to create a panic in order to reap the profits.

"Woodstock Road, Poplar, E.14. JOHN SCURR (M.P.)."

Comment would spoil this pronouncement! But what an advertisement for parliamentarism! What a study in securing "Socialism" through Parliament!

Financial prosperity, enhanced capitalism, is the argument advanced in support of Parliamentary Labourism! The *Daily Herald* for October 21, 1921, gave an account of conditions in New South Wales under the "Labour" Premiership of Mr. Dooley, showing that exploitation had prospered under Labour rule. Companies had been formed, factories built, bank deposits had swollen.

We have said that Labour Parliamentarism was pledged to maintain capitalism. Can the truth of that statement be doubted?

VI. The Oath of Allegiance.

Before a member can recover his deposit or take his seat in the House of Commons, he has either to swear or to affirm allegiance to the Monarchy. In its simplest and less objectionable form, this declaration is as follows:—

"I do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George, his heirs and successors according to law."

When asked how it is possible for a person professing Socialist ideas to make such a declaration, the parliamentarian usually falls back on an explanation similar to that advanced by George Lansbury, in a speech made in the House of Commons in December, 1925:—

"When I made the affirmation I was asked; 'How is it that you people who say that ultimately you believe in a republic, can take the affirmation or the oath?' Well, on that document there are the words 'as by law appointed,' and if you can appoint by law, you can disappoint by law. I call attention to that point because we are charged with wanting to bring about a revolution and some of us definitely want to do so, but we want to do it in this House and by means of the vote and legislation."

That Lansbury should be asked this, proves that the purpose of the oath is to defeat the opinion of democracy, once that democracy is enlightened to Socialism. Behind this conservative question is the grim capitalist intention to destroy democracy and all labour organisation should the workers en masse challenge the rights of property and exploitation.

Socialists cannot consistently with their principles endorse Lansbury's interpretation of the oath. No Socialist should take the oath or affirm allegiance to the Monarchy. If he does so, he is committing perjury. Richard Carlile justified making a declaration, under legal compulsion, calling upon God to witness that he was an Atheist. He avowed the mockery and took his stand boldly on its legality and its compulsion. A Socialist might extend the idea and even defend

such conduct. But his remaining conduct would have to be in line with his Republicanism. Unfortunately, no parliamentarian has emphasised his Republicanism. Always, the parliamentarian insists on his loyalty to the throne and betrays growing indifference to proletarian opinion, interests and censure. The true position for the Socialist to adopt is to decline all political and religious oaths, for they imply infallibility where only mediocrity prevails, and they involve perjury, corruption, and stagnation. Oaths corrupt all and protect none. In the hour of actual crisis, no oath of allegiance will save the Monarchy.

Where the Socialist adopts the view of Richard Carlile, that the oath is but a matter of form, his repudiation of the form should be pressed home consistently in his propaganda, and he should spare no effort to challenge the perjury imposed upon him.

Lansbury has explained the comparatively mild affirmation made by the rank-and-file M.P. or private member. But he has never explained the Privy Council oath. This was indeed wisdom.

So long as Labour was in opposition, with the exception of those members who had ratted to the Coalition during the war and should never have been received back to the Labour ranks, the simple affirmation already quoted was all that the Labour member had to stumble over and defend. But when the Labour Party passed from the Opposition to the Treasury benches, its leaders became Ministers of the Crown. It was compulsory on them, as Crown Ministers, to take the Privy Councillorship, and with it the Privy Councillor's oath.

That oath is as follows:—

"I do swear by Almighty God to be a true and faithful servant unto the King's Majesty, as one of His Majesty's Privy Council. I will not know or understand of any manner of thing to be attempted against His Majesty's Person, Honour, Crown, or Dignity Royal. but I will let and withstand the same to the uttermost of my Power, and either cause it to be revealed to His Majesty Himself, or to such of his Privy Council as shall advertise His Majesty of the same. I will in all things to be moved, treated, and debated in Council, faithfully and truly declare my mind and opinion, according to my Heart and Conscience, and will keep secret all matter committed and revealed unto me, or that shall be treated of secretly in Council. And if any of the said Treaties or Councils shall touch any of the Counsellors, I will not reveal it unto him, but will keep the same until such time as, by the Consent of His Majesty, or of the Counsel, Publication shall be made thereof. I will to my uttermost bear faith and allegiance unto the King's Majesty, and will insist and defend all Jurisdictions, pre-eminences and Authoritiles, granted to His Majesty, and annexed to the Crown by Acts of Parliament, or otherwise, against all Foreign Princes, Persons, Prelates, States, or Potentates. And generally in all things I will do as a faithful and true Servant ought to do to His Majesty. So help me God."

The terms of this oath could be reduced to an affirmation by substituting the words "solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm" for swear and omit the reference to the deity. The change might cause alarm in Court circles, but it would be legally acceptable.

It is on record that, when John Morley took his seat in the House of Lords in May, 1928, he insisted on affirming. But no form of affirmation could be found, and a compromise was effected by omitting the "So help me God." Which was all very childish and absurd; for what right had a man with Morley's outlook on life, and with his keen understanding of radical materialistic philosophy, ever to permit himself to drift into the position of becoming a member of the House of Lords? To-day, we have Lord Snell, Lord Passmore, and Lord Allen, as well as Viscount Snowden. So the criticism of Morley need not be pressed. To my mind, since Morley became a member of the Upper Chamber, his scruples in the matter of affirming only emphasised the criminal folly of his situation.

It is the same with the Privy Councillors. Let but one Labour Privy Councillor affirm—and which one would dare to do so or even to suggest doing so?—the shameless text of the affirmation becomes less formal and more binding in consequence of the scruple that affirmed rather than utter meaningless words about the deity.

Unless it is explained carefully that the omission of the deity is a growing concession to rational understanding; and the rest of the verbiage is protested strenuously. No Labour Privy Councillor would do this.

In the Privy Councillor's oath there is no suggestion of the Crown being legally "disappointed" by law. On the contrary, it definitely maintains and renders absolute the authority of the Crown. Whatever one may think about the wisdom or unwisdom of submitting without protest, much less objection, to compulsory oath-taking, it is certain that the plausible Labourist policy for taking the ordinary member's oath is rendered null and void by the fact that the leaders of the party have taken the Privy Councillor's oath, and are upheld, in so doing, by the back benchers of the party.

It is quite certain that one cannot be true to the terms of this oath and remain a Socialist thinker and agitator. All we have to consider is whether those who take this oath, and their colleagues of the back benches, incline more towards loyalty to Socialism and the proletariat or to capitalism and the Monarchy. The answer of fact and experience to this enquiry must decide whether parliamentarism can advance or must retard the struggle towards social emancipation of the working class. And that answer is one of monotonous consistency and reiterated sameness of tendency. The loyalty of the parliamentarian is all to the capitalist constitution and none of it to the proletarian struggle.

The facts emphasise the unanswerable character of the anti-parliamentarians' logic in this matter, a logic not of schools, but of everyday experience and grim sordid reality. Labourism does not regard the Privy Councillor's oath as a formal declaration made under duress, but as an expression of actual identity of interest with the social and political institution of monarchy. Labourism revels in the snobbery of regal courts. When the social struggle enters on its last critical phase, not Conservatism, but Labourism will protect the Monarchy and fight to uphold the dignity and sanctity of Church and State against the rebel hosts of oppressed labour. There is no need for "Church and King Clubs" so long as the cumbrous machinery of parliamentarism exists to undermine and secure places for the misleaders of parliamentarism. Did not MacDonald form his National Government to save British capitalism, and did not the Labour Opposition endorse much of his economy stunt, before passing into the shades of Opposition? The Labour Opposition opposed to the National Government merely the idea of continued parliamentarism, continued playing at ins and outs, instead of pursuing a policy of class-struggle.

VII. The Parliamentary Labour Press

The independent *Daily Herald* fell into great financial difficulties in 1922, at the very moment when the workers were turning to the Labour Party. It was first "guaranteed" and then taken over by the Labour Party Executive. This fact enables us to judge the value of Labour Parliamentarism. Whatever apologies may be urged in defence of Parliamentary shortcomings, the same excuses cannot be advanced in defence of a weak and futile press. The business of the Labour Press is to make Socialists: to develop the class struggle and class understanding: to create such a Socialist proletariat that, if Parliament can be used at all, a revolutionary proletariat is always pressing forward for the most vigorous use of the alleged Parliamentary weapon. On the other hand, if the weapon is useless, the same proletariat, in the light of its class-consciousness, will demand that the working class struggle shall assume an anti-Parliamentary character. In either case, the workers' press should get rid of all false distinctions between industrial and political methods, and should aim at an informed working class, whose slogan is: "*All Power* to the Workers." Whether through Parliament or against it, the workers' aim should be the end of Parliamentarism, the liquidation of political society, and the establishment of a Workers' Industrial Republic. Let us consider how, at the moment of crisis, Labour's press, with its notion of Parliamentarism, functioned.

Hamilton Fyfe, a journalist whose experience was mainly of the Northcliffe press, took charge as the nominee of Eccleston Square. What an idea of Labour journalism! How typical of its capitalist servility, mediocrity, and orthodoxy! Fyfe took charge on September 9, 1922, when the election was coming, following upon the fall of Lloyd George. The period is that of the narrowly averted war with Turkey and the Mudania Conference; the Lusanne Conference; the meeting between Curzon and Mussolini; civil war in Ireland, ending in the establishment of the Irish Free State; and the Unemployed March on London. The following excerpts depict the policy of the paper more eloquently than any comment could depict it:—

6/10/22.—Mudania Conference. A leader, "Back General Harrington," and not Lloyd George. An armistice "is a purely military business for generals to put through."

18/10/22.—Lord Robert Cecil's "influence for good has been vastly impaired" by the report that he has advocated the League of Nations having air-bombers of its own. A leader on the election; "To call them Conservatives is a misuse of words. If your house is falling about your ears you do not conserve it by sitting still. . . . It will cost money and more than money to let the house fall."

31/10/22.—Mr. Fyfe signs an article on Mussolini's coup. "Impossible not to feel a certain amount of admiration for him. . . . The Fascists, if they abandoned violence, might set the feet of the Italian people on the way we are all seeking."

9/11/22.—A leader on silk stockings, which asks, "Are they naughty?"

11/11/22.—A leader on "Thoughts for Armistice Day." A thought recommended is that "people whose fortunes are moderate—say between five and twenty thousand—they would get off lightly" under a capital levy.

20/11/22.—A leader, "The Fetish of Class," rebukes the Tories. "This stupid effort to divide a nation into two sections."

23/11/22.—A leader of protest because a boy has been fined 10/- for crying "Beaver."

27/11/22.—A leader upon how funny it is that a barber has arranged for wireless concerts for his clients to listen in to: soon they will want to dictate letters and eat and drink while being shaved.

20/11/22.—News of the Greek ex-Ministers being executed for carrying on unauthorised war. Leader, "An act of unreflecting brutality that will do Greece incalculable harm." Four days earlier, on the occasion of the execution of Erskine Childers, a leader dealing with the nutritive character of tea.

5/12/22.—The Irish Free State Bill becomes law. The leader says: "This is a great day in history. For the first time in eight centuries Irish men and women can wake up this morning and say to themselves; 'Ours is a free country.'"

During December, 1922, the "splashes" (*i.e.*, the streamer and double or three column titles on the front page) were devoted to the Ilford murder. On December 9, the shooting of Rory O'Connor and other Irish Republican leaders was given a small story down-column: the Ilford report is given four and a half columns.

It is perfectly clear that such a continual policy is only trifling with the class struggle and the issue of life and death for the working class.

For Labour journalism, the news columns were terrible. Surely the news column of a Labour paper should record and indicate the class struggle.

22/12/22.—A leader on "Exciting and delightful Christmas," called "The best is here." For the children the joy of presents, of the stockings in the morning and at night the lighted tree, for us the joy of giving—of filling their little simple hearts with happiness. Christmas is the festival of children, love and home. Yes! but what of the children of the workless? To them and the unemployed adults there is no reference.

1/1/23.—A leader on the fact that English couples have won in an international dancing contest. "From fox-hunter John Bull has turned fox-trotter, and the sound of the horn that brings him from his bed emanates from a jazz band."

3/1/23.—A leader on the French demand to seize the Rhur; "Dismember Germany like Richelieu. . . . Fear rather than a crude lust for territory." Iron, steel and coal are not mentioned.

4/1/23.—A leader on the fascination of precious stones. Why does not an author call his book the "Great Trousers Mystery" instead of the "Great Jewel Mystery"?

On January 12th, 1923, the news of the French entry into the Rhur is given. "Let the League act now . . . . or be for ever regarded as a sham," said the Leader. The League did not act, but the League was not treated as "a sham" in the *Daily Herald*.

Next day was announced the master builders' big offensive against the operatives' wages and hours—especially the latter. The leaders were (1) a rebuke to the *Times* for approving of the Fascists; (2) on the Magnetism of the Human Eye—"humorous."

On the 18th there appears a leader on the marriage of the Duke of York. It complains of "overdoing" it—love is "sacred," the Press agent should keep out.

At this time we find there is always a front page "splash" with a streamer-head and three columns head below, regardless of the character or importance of the news.

When Parliament meets, the length of Parliamentary reports compared with the rest of the paper, is enormously increased, non-Labour speeches, except by Ministers, being omitted almost wholly. This is sound enough policy, when the speeches and matter are of a class nature. Also it is a reply to the capitalist method of reporting.

1/2/23.—Leader asking "Why is it fashionable to like old furniture?"

15/2/23.—Leader upon MacDonald's speech upon housing. The middle class has been betrayed by the two great capitalist parties.

19/3/23.—Leaders on Protection, and on Beauty, apropos of a man having stolen a Gainsborough. A streamer and three column splash on a speech by J. H. Thomas on housing.

20/3/23.—Closing words of a leader; The opponents of change "have no understanding whatever of the revolution that has already taken place in the minds of the spiritual and intellectual leaders of the people, and is now rapidly winning adherents among all classes—even among the capitalists themselves.".

6/4/23.—A leader, "Give Trade a Chance to Revive." It attacks the employers for threatening war when "Labour has done its best to use reason."

24/4/23.—A streamer and splash advising workers to break the sugar ring, by using less sugar.

23/5/23.—Baldwin becomes Premier. A special article. "In his native county he has always been highly popular. A quiet man of simple habits, inseparable from his pipe, he loves pottering about the lovely Severn-side country. . . . He is keen on his garden and his pigs. . . . It is clear that in Mr. Baldwin we have a new type of Prime Minister, perhaps a new kind of statesman—simply the ordinary man with the knowledge of a man of the world, wide sympathies and generous ideals. The country will like him." There is also a description of his "strong sense of social responsibility."

The leader says; "It is to his credit that he should so quickly have gained a reputation for soundness of judgment and what is better still, for kindliness, for honesty and for a real desire to secure both better conditions at home and peaceful, friendly relations abroad. . . . He is a plain business man. . . . We cannot help feeling sympathetic towards Lord Curzon, disappointed of his great ambition and of a prize which by long service he seemed entitled to claim."

At the end of August it was decided to close down the paper and a recommendation to that effect was put down for the Trades Union Congress (24-8-23). The staff, however, went directly to the Congress and persuaded it to rescind this decision, and make instead drastic economies in the size and features of the paper (8-9-23). The pages of the *Daily Herald* became fewer, but no more radical. On October 24th, on the occasion of the Red revolt in Hamburg, the Berlin invasion of the Saxon Socialist Republic, the French recognition of an independent Rhine Republic and the Bavarian breakaway from Berlin, the two leaders dealt (1) with the false promises of a speech by A. Geddes on economy; (2) with promising bye-elections. On the 31st, on the death of Bonar Law, a biographical notice is inserted, in which the Tory statesman is highly praised as a "rare personality." Great space is given now to Parliament! With the election, which ultimately led to the Labour Government, the year closes. On November 27th, "Your Food Will Cost You More" was recommended as an election slogan.

After being taken over by the official Labour Parliamentarians, the *Daily Herald* pursued no coherent policy, not even right-wing or reformist. Constitutionalism was praised; Mussolini was also praised, and the *Times* abused for praising him. The League of Nations was damned and then revived. A Liberal election slogan was adopted, and Liberal leaders flayed for their Liberalism. More than that, the paper was diverted at the most critical moment to discuss "Are silk stockings naughty?" or the sinfulness of crying "Beaver." This was not a policy, right or left, parliamentary or anti-parliamentary. It was imitated capitalist journalism: idiocy for the common people; in a phrase, the Yellow Press!

The idea behind such seeming hysteria was the capitalist business idea, to be read by the workers accustomed to the tit-bits of the capitalist press. It was the idea of a capitalist journalist wanting in Labour understanding; a man who rejoiced in frivolous leaders; sensationalism. And the purpose of such trifling is sidetracking the workers' minds away from the class struggle!

In November, 1929, the *Daily Herald* was taken over jointly by Odhams Press, Ltd. (owning 51 per cent. of the shares) and the T.U.C. (owning 49 per cent. of the shares).

Odhams Press appointed the chairman and managing director, Julius Elias, managing director of Odhams Press and several Odhams subsidiaries. Odhams Press appointed four of the remaining directors (apparently members of their staff). The T.U.C. appointed the vice-chairman, Ernest Bevin, and three directors, Citrine, Tillett and Pugh.

The *Daily Herald* is thus controlled by an amalgam of a capitalist firm and of the trade union bureaucracy. The Odhams directors included Major-General Sir Newton Moore, of the British Empire Steel Corporation, General Electric Co., and twelve tin, gold, and other companies; Captain Bell White of Zalenea Copper Co., Ltd., A. G. Cousins of the Investment Registery, Ltd., and Alhambra Ltd., and J. E. Ward, who had connections with the Harrison Group (via the *Daily Chronicle* Investment Corporation, Provincial Newspapers), and was on several paper, hotel, and other companies.

Odhams Press owns *John Bull*, *The People*, *Sporting Life*, *Debrett's Peerage*, *Passing Show*, and other similar papers. After the passing of Horatio Bottomley from the paper he founded, Odhams prospered. Its dividends since that time have been most interesting reading.

Mellor, in his article in the *Herald* on Tuesday, November 12th, 1929, dealing with the changes, urged that the *Herald* was going to become, not more like the capitalist press in its form, contents, love and trifling stunts, defence of the Empire, etc., etc., but more effectively like the capitalist press. It became permanently enlarged, and its news editor was Mr. McBride, who had been prior to the change assistant news editor of the *Daily Express*. And it gave an insurance policy to its readers.

The insurance policy was certainly a concession to capitalist ideas. Only a short time before, Tracey, of the publicity department of the T.U.C., had issued a book on the British Press, denouncing insurance schemes as resembling "nothing so much as a campaign waged for the bribery of the readers." On February 25th, 1928 the *Daily Herald*, in a leading article, addressed to Lord Beaverbrook, had attacked the insurance scheme idea, in the following unmeasured terms:—

"Lord Beaverbrook claims that by the extension of his insurance scheme he is a benefactor to the workers. If we may say so, that is sheer poppycock. The development is merely a phase of the circulation war he is raging. . . . He offers people who will pledge themselves to spend 26/- a year on his newspaper benefits which they can get from insurance societies for a fraction of that sum."

"Poppycock . . . . 'business" . . . . expensive "benefactions" . . . . the final stages of the road the *Herald* has been taking are now accomplished.

Provision is made, in this deal, that the policy of the *Daily Herald* should be that of the Labour Party and the T.U.C. Only the T.U.C. directors were to vote on political and industrial matters in Board meetings. Sankey and Jowett were to be referees on what was and what was not political and industrial.

The National Government was formed in August 24, 1931. There can be no doubt that a majority of the Labour Cabinet accepted the ten per cent. cut in the Unemployment Benefits which the National Government afterwards imposed. This can be proved from the columns of the *Daily Herald* of that date. The Editor's article was

printed in black type across the front page. In the course of it he wrote:—

"On several occasions during the past week the Cabinet appeared to have reached—indeed, did reach—agreement that benefits should not be cut.

"Each time, however, outside forces intervened anew and the formidable pressure caused the issue to be thrown back into the melting pot.

"The final reconsideration came on Saturday (at the first Saturday Cabinet meeting for many years) following consultations by the Economy Committee of the Cabinet with the spokesmen of the Conservative and Liberal Parties on Friday afternoon.

"The decision for a ten per cent. cut then taken made the resignation of a number of Ministers inevitable."

The Editor of the *Daily Herald* stated that the Ministers who had decided to resign "as a protest against the unemployment benefit cut" paid tribute "to the sincerity and courage of the *Cabinet majority* who consented to cuts."

The *Daily Herald* gave a list of eight members of the Labour Cabinet who voted against the cuts. These were:—Arthur Henderson, W. Graham, A. Greenwood, A. V. Alexander, G. Lansbury, T. Johnston, W. Adamson, C. Addison, "and possibly others."

The list did not include:—J. R. Clynes, Tom Shaw, Herbert Morrison, H. B. Lees-Smith, Wedgewood Benn, Margaret Bondfield, Lord Parmoor, and Lord Passfield.

Most of these eight persons, who remain in the Labour Party, must have voted in the Labour Cabinet for the ten per cent. cut in unemployment benefit. Otherwise there would not have been a majority for the cut.

Following upon this crisis, and the establishment of the National Government, the *Daily Herald* revealed how impossible was the Parliamentary outlook of the T.U.C. directors of the *Daily Herald*. It never got beyond the idea of Parliamentary electioneering. It never developed a Socialist or class vision. It never aimed at ending capitalism and its mean sordid crisis. Its only policy was to anticipate the Parliamentary fall of the National Government and the Parliamentary arrival of the Third Labour Government. The idea of place, of "arriving," as the cant jargon terms it, inspired every line and dictated every sentence of the editorials published by the *Daily Herald*, after Ramsay MacDonald and Baldwin established their "United Front." In pursuit of its ideal, the Labour Party turned to prophecy. The following selected examples of its exercise of this art make interesting reading:—

November 11, 1931.

LIFE MEASURED IN MONTHS.

The new Government is a week old. The new Parliament began its active existence only yesterday. But already each has in it, plainly visible, the "seeds of its own decay." Their lives may be measured, not in years, but in months.

December 9, 1931.

ALL NOW OVER.

Now is the day of the Doctor's Dilemma. "Doctor" MacDonald may avoid decision this week, and gain the respite of the Parliamentary recess. but the time draws very near when he must make his choice. And the choice, whichever way it falls, means the end of the "National" Government.

February 3, 1932.

WEEK BY WEEK.

The cracks in the foundation of the present Government are already appearing. Week by week they will widen. Resignation will be called for.

July 28, 1932.

THE PYRAMIDS; LABOUR GETS READY.

All these convergent currents are wearing away the base of the "National" Government, which seemed, only a few months ago, as solid as the Pyramids. Its crash is inevitable. Labour must get ready to govern.

December 12, 1932.

NOT DISTANT.

A Labour Government in the not distant future is a certainty.

May 1, 1933.

SOONER THAN ANYONE EXPECTED.

The Government is faced by the prospect of another revolt. . . . The House is divided. It may collapse sooner than anyone expected.

May 3, 1933.

NEXT AUTUMN.

It is hardly surprising that the Tory managers should be contemplating an autumn election. . . . Their internal troubles are threatening disruption.

November 20, 1933.

INCIPIENT.

There is an incipient split in the ranks of the "National" Government.

Here we have a mass of ridiculous party political prophecy, which is interesting only as a study in confession and confusion: a Labour Government is recognised as an alternative to a National or to a Tory Government, existing for the same purpose, to administer capitalism: a Capitalist Government is viewed as a mere party political Government, and not as a huge financial or economic power, the fundamental industrial factor of society; and the capitalist press is appreciated not in the terms of its financial prowess, but as an equal political weapon with the Labour press—a grotesque absurdity! The Labour press rivals it with a similar sensationalism, until it, at last, becomes part of the capitalist press. And the workers continue hoping —and hopeless!

VIII. Speeches In Parliament

Shortly after the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, the revolutionary storm that burst over Europe called forth Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* and *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*. Both these works are classics of revolt, and bear on the vexed question of Parliamentarism. As history and philosophy they have never been surpassed. They possessed the further advantage of having been written by a man who, at the commencement of his exile in London, flirted with Chartism and its ideas of Parliamentary suffrage. Not bias of outlook, but only the grim logic of fact, drives Marx to the definite anti-Parliamentary conclusions to be found in these records of struggle. Definitely, and with monotonous reiteration, their author proclaims Parliamentary and Constitutional action to be counter-revolutionary, because the strength of the middle class, the small-traders' class, is in Parliament, whilst the workers' strength is on the street. He shows that Parliament is at the mercy of the military, not the military at the disposition of Parliament, and ridicules "constitutional freedom" as a comfortable middle-class way of negating real freedom.

Marx impeaches Social Democracy, in name and in substance, that very Labourist Parliamentarism of which Ramsay MacDonald and J. H. Thomas became the leaders *en route* to Toryism; the "proletarian

leaders'" political betrayal of the workers to the small traders' interests, the sad record of inherent weaknesses, constitutional limitations, revolutionary trimmings, and treacherous substance.

Parliamentarians, Marx dismisses, in scornful words that apply forcibly to the "Labour" acrobats at Westminster of to-day, as poor, weak-minded men, so little accustomed to anything like success during their generally very obscure lives, that they actually believe their Parliamentary amendments more important than external events.

Could better description be conceived of Welsh, the miner-poet M.P., who followed up his much-applauded maiden speech by an account in the *Sunday Express* of the ghosts of dead legislators, all capitalists, he saw at Westminster and his veneration for the atmosphere of "the Mother of Parliaments"? Welsh actually employed this cant capitalist description as his own!

Can one imagine the speech of such a man being intended to emancipate the workers when its author is so desperately anxious for admiration and a Parliamentary career? Fancy seeing the ghost of that hoary old humbug, Gladstone, and wishing to emulate him when one should be inspired by the spirit of one's dead and living comrades of the mines, the fields, and the workshops.

Welsh pled in the atmosphere of capitalism to the assembly of capitalism for the amelioration of capitalist conditions. He "awed" the representatives of capitalist finance! Are we to believe that their awe militated against their determination to perpetuate capitalism? Are we to forget that Parliamentarism gave France Aristide Briand and President Millerand? That men who once sentamentalised as Welsh did, murdered in Germany Karl Leibknecht and Rosa Luxembourg? Are we to suppose that speeches in Parliament affect legislation, that they reach the workers outside of Parliament, that they appeal to the capitalists within? Nothing of the kind.

Speaking in the debate on the address, on Tuesday, February 13, 1923, John Wheatley complained of the empty benches to which anti-Parliamentarians always said he would address his protests. The following night the *Pall Mall Gazette* reported his protest with a sneer as follows:—

> **"During the dinner hour last night, when the Labour members seized the opportunity to harangue each other and a handful of Government supporters on the grievances of the hunger-marchers, Mr. Wheatley was indiscreet enough to make reference to the smallness of the attendance."**

But it may be said that Parliament is a sounding board, that although the members withdraw from the street corners and the workers' lecture halls, the speeches they make in Parliament are broadcasted through the columns of the ordinary press to the workers of the country. This is not true. And it is known that it is not true. In the main, Parliamentary speeches have no interest for the common people, and the capitalist press makes no effort to create an interest.

We will take the case of five leading members of the Labour Party who took part in the House of Commons debate on Tuesday, February 13, 1923. Here are the number of words given by the London penny morning papers of their speeches:—The *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* never reported them at all. The *Daily Chronicle* only reported one of them — George Lansbury, and gave him 14 words!

The *Daily News* only reported two of them—giving 32 words to Tom Shaw and 45 words to Jack Jones! The *Westminster Gazette* reported three out of the five—giving 44 words to Shaw, 87 words to Lansbury, and 30 words to Wheatley. *Only* the *Daily Herald* reported all five, and gave sufficient words to make the report intelligible:—Shaw, 165; Lansbury, 410; Wheatley, 393; Adamson (at that time a Privy Councillor of some years' standing, and reported in none of the other journals), 208; and Jones, 120 words.

During the time that the Labour Party was in opposition, the papers other than the *Daily Herald* made no reference to the intervention in the debates of David Kirkwood, J. Maxton, G. Buchanan, Neil MacLean, Campbell Stephen, J. Muir, and T. Johnston. Newbold's efforts were reported in the Communist press, because for the time being he was a Communist. Scrymgeour relied on his *Prohibitionist* until it collapsed. Obviously the value of speeches in Parliament turn upon the power of the press outside and exercise no influence beyond the point allowed by that press.

How small is that point is evidenced by the following excerpt from the *Evening News*, Glasgow, for November 24, 1922:—

"Mr Newbold, the Motherwell Communist, and Mr. Scrymgeour, the Prohibitionist from Dundee, get a very poor press for their first-night performances at Westminster, and experienced Parliamentarians declare that never again will members come from all parts of the House to the debating chamber when either of these two gentlemen rises. . . . One Lobby expert declares . . . that the Communist M.P. had begun and ended his Parliamentary career."

Which was correct. These facts illustrate the power of the Press over Parliamentarism. So great is that power, and so utterly impossible is it for anyone to dodge facing the reality of it, that Thomas Johnston, then only a Bailie, was impelled to deal with the question in *Forward*, for May 13, 1922, under the heading, "Would Capitalist Lies Upset a Labour Government?" The author of this article seemed to possess no conception of the real proletarian objection to the capitalist press: namely, that it is an industrial machine worked by slaves and controlled by magnates, in which, at no stage, arises the right of free expression, since the journalists employed pen not their own thoughts, but those dictated by their master's interest. Therefore, the essayist objects to the proletarian suppression of the capitalist press—an entirely different question from the suppression of real opinion—and conceives of a Labour Government, supported by the *Daily Herald, controlled by the Trade Union Congress and the National Union of Journalists*, and opposed *by a capitalist press sustained by a wealth of finance that no Labour press could command*, as a reasonable condition of affairs. But he declares that there must not be a Labour Government press established, because that would set vicious precedents, which would be used, without scruple, by the *next* Capitalist Government, greatly to the detriment of "Labour"!

Johnston's innocent Parliamentary idea of setting capitalism a bad example is distinctly funny. *It is obvious that the Parliamentarians propose not to abolish the capitalist press for this reason—they have no idea of abolishing capitalist society.* The Free Press should not be abolished but encouraged by the proletariat. The Free Press is the weapon of democracy. But the Plutocratic Press is no more a Free Press than the Stalinist State Press is a Free or Socialist Press.

As to a Press controlled by the Trade Union Congress, did not those strike issues, *The British Worker* and *The Scottish Worker*, show how such sheets can be used, by the executive, to sabotage back to slavery, starvation, and victimisation, the workers? That Trade Union Press tickles our fancy, for, as good Trade Unionists, the workers *now have to support the "Daily Record," and are pledged to set up and print, at Trade Union rates, whatever attacks it makes on the working class movement!*

So long as the workers are dependent upon the Press for their news and for their outlook, so long as they have no intention of doing other on the industrial field than to obey, for wages, the Press magnates, and so to poison the wells of knowledge, Labour Parliamentarism, even were it sincerely Socialist, would remain impotent as a propaganda activity. But when the workers decide no longer to be the stool pigeons of their own destruction, Labour Parliamentarism will be unnecessary.

The complete failure of Parliament as a sounding board compels us to realise that the political struggle of the class war is an economic one, a direct struggle between the financial ownership of the Press and the workers' thought and the revolutionary agitation and social-industrial power of the workers themselves. So long as the workers are devoid of economic power, so long as they remain "represented" slaves where they should be active and communing freemen and free-women, the workers have no social voice, no Press, no political power.

IX. Practical Parliamentarism, War and Crisis

The tragic futility of Parliamentarism in time of war was exposed by me in the columns of *The Spur* during the war years, 1914-1918. Much of that futility is put on record in my book, *At Grips With War*, 1932. In that work, I deal with the tragedy of French and German Socialism; of American Socialism toying with reformism whilst feeding war; of Hyndman's Gun Share Socialism; of post-war Parliamentarians speechifying to no effect in the House of Commons. The sad story need not be repeated in this work.

H. M. Hyndman was the father of Parliamentarism in Britain. His activity was somewhat barren of even seeming result. His time would have been spent better urging anti-Parliamentarism. Hyndman, despite his war-mongering, confused Socialism with Parliamentarism. Keir Hardie sensed the error of confounding such opposites. For Hardie was not without Socialist understanding and inclined, privately, to Communist Anarchist opinions. As a practical politician, he dismissed "Socialism" as a prejudice, and pioneered the great illusion, "Labourism." Hardie's "Labourism" was identical with Parliamentary "Socialism," or Social Democracy, in pre-war Germany. Hyndman was at one with the "Socialist" Parliamentarians of Germany. Yet during the years of navalism and militarism, of preparedness for the Great War by the capitalist interests in Britain and Germany, Hyndman and his colleagues in the Social Democratic movement here were busy prating of the German menace. They watched the growth of Social Democratic representation in the Reichstag and they spoke of the achievements of Parliamentarism. But they never explained how,

if Social Democratic representation in the Reichstag meant the existence of a Socialist proletariat and a real working class conquest of political power, there would be a German menace.

Why should Germany, with its powerful Social Democratic representation in the Reichstag, with its voting strength greater, much greater, than its representation in the Reichstag, have been the military menace of Europe?

Leibknecht's famous Erfurt apology of comparative weakness in the country does not apply here. For there was no comparative weakness in the country. On the contrary, there existed a great disproportion between Parliamentary "Socialism's" *rapid* increase of voting strength, and the smallness in the increase of its membership of the Reichstag. It required many more votes to return a Social Democrat than it took to return any avowed capitalist candidate. Universal suffrage sometimes exhibits these quaint peculiarities. In any case, it was an actual growth in political power, in calculated and organised opinion of Parliamentary Socialism, regularly registered and steadily increasing, to the extent of the votes polled. Surely the British Labour Parliamentarians should have allowed that these "Socialist" representatives were backed by the workers of the country. Yet Hyndman and his Parliamentarians insisted that these German colleagues of theirs were returned only that they might administer the Kaiser's imperial interests. Similarly, the German Parliamentarians considered the British Labour Parliamentarians as representatives of Britain's imperial interests. Both were right.

When the Great War came, in all countries involved, Parliamentarism expressed the failure of the workers to be class conscious, and but measured their sheepish subjection to a brutal and impudent imperialism. The Great War revealed the impotence and fraud of Parliamentarism; its opposition to all Socialist thought and action.

In 1912, Karl Liebknecht captured the Kaiser's seat, Potsdam, for the politics of the Red Republic. Two years later, his electors were shedding their blood in defence of the Black Eagle. They were fighting enthusiastically in the army of the Kaiser who, in 1891, had addressed publicly these words to the soldiers of the Fatherland:—

"Recruits! Before the altar and the servant of God you have given me the oath of allegiance . . . you are my soldiers, you have surrendered yourselves to me body and soul. Only one enemy can exist for you—my enemy. With the present Socialist machinations, it may happen that I shall order you to shoot your own relatives, your brothers, or even your parents—which God forbid—and then you are bound in duty mplicitly to obey my orders."

Yes, the good Social Democratic Parliamentarians, the conquest-of-parliamentary-power-ites, fought against the enemies of this Imperial assassin and died winning his Iron Crosses. They helped to imprison the heroic Socialist son of the step-father of German Parliamentarism, Wilhelm Liebknecht.

Once a Social revolutionist, imprisoned and exiled for his loyalty to Socialism, a man who took unkindly to compromise, but finally consented swearing he would ne'er consent, Wilhelm Liebknecht at last sacrificed his revolutionary energy to further and consolidate the futile Parliamentarism of Lassalle: "Through universal suffrage to victory." It was the inevitable logic of that Parliamentarism, its appeal to immediate economic interests, that reconciled the German workers to their imprisonment of Karl Liebknecht.

The father would say that Parliamentarism could not save the son because the Socialists were comparatively weak in the country. Well, after the political revolution of 1918, the Social Democrats, the Parliamentary Socialists, were in power in the country. They drove the Kaiser into exile. They murdered on the streets the real Socialists, the Socialists of thought and action, they became the tools of British as well as German capitalism, and they consummated their criminal connection by becoming parties to the murder in cold blood of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg in January, 1919.

Not the Kaiser, with the reluctant acquiescence of the Parliamentary Socialists, but the Parliamentary Socialists with the acquiescence of the German capitalists, accomplished this assassination. We cannot say that Parliamentarism has done nothing. It slaughtered to preserve the tottering power of Capitalism.

During "Red Week" of March, 1913, the German Social Democratic Party gained 148,108 new members, most of whom served the Kaiser in the Great War. It secured 32,298 new subscribers, few of whom hesitated to rally to the German Imperialist war-flag. It held 41,969 agitation meetings, which offered no menace to the ruling patriotism. It made house to house canvas in 4,288 cities and towns, besides distributing 6,759,320 and selling 1,580,010 books and pamphlets. Every man canvassed, every recipient of a free leaflet, every purchaser of a book or pamphlet, either served, was prepared to serve, or wished to serve the murder lords of his country.

Parliamentarism claims to represent organised labour. We concede the claim. Parliamentarism does represent organised labour. It represented organised labour before the war, whilst the capitalists of all lands were inspiring the workers with their hymns of hate. It represents organised labour to-day, whilst the capitalist class is tinkering with and mocking the misery of the unemployed. Labour organised to further its own victimisation and destruction.

We allow that Parliamentarism represents "organised labour," *whereas, anti-Parliamentarism expresses labour growing through class consciousness into being organised society.*

When the Social Democratic member for Mannheim died fighting at Luneville, for the Kaiser's Cause, it was organised labour that drove him to his doom, an economic conscript. Intervieved in London, at the end of 1913, Professor Debruck told the *Daily Mail* representative—

> **"Germany for the past fifteen years has been a country of immigration, not of emigration, and her excellent school and university system is producing every year a surplus of educated men. If we possessed more territories inhabited by inferior races, their administration and development would afford to this educated surplus the same kind of occupation and employment that Englishmen of a similar class find in Egypt or India."**

One can complete the picture easily. Patriotic lectures at so much a lecture. Journalistic exploitation of commercial rivalries—at so much a column. A Social Democratic Party anxious to secure political power and dominated in consequence by the palliative interests of the 774 Trade Councils, to which 9,418 trade unions were affiliated, with a membership of 2,339,571 members. This meant Social Democratic subserviency to the national concentration of capitalist interests. The Mannheim member never would have sat in the Reichstag had he

opposed the sentiment of the economic interests which swept him on to his doom, in company with so many German workers.

Parliamentarism means being practical. In every country it operates in the same way to the same disastrous results. An industrial constituency interested in the creation of armaments may return a Labour member, but it insists that he shall support war-interests. In 1911, at the Thames Shipbuilding Works, the Super Dreadnought, the battleship "Thunderer," was launched by the Archbishop of Canterbury. To the inhabitants of Canning Town, the construction of this vessel meant the subsistence level, the bread line. When the warship work was lost to the Thames, Will Thorne, West Ham's Parliamentary "Socialist" member, and more recently an aristocratic lickspittle and eulogist of royalty, in company with Lord Roberts, addressed a huge protest meeting, demanding the work for London as opposed to Newcastle.

The force of economic compulsion explained this tragedy of misery and degradation. Inevitably, Labour M.P.'s—representing the workers as toilers subject to capitalism, having immediate interests under capitalism to serve—were compelled to make dramatic platform appearances in support of war. With the platform and the press controlled by capitalist interests, with the workers conditioned by wages, there was but one comfortably popular path to take. That was to recruit. It promised immediate finance at a time of threatened famine. It guaranteed the immediate future. It voiced the immediate wants of the war workers. It was practical. It meant a safe seat and governing-class votes at the election and the continuance of £400. All this had to be considered. Consequently, the Labour Party placed the services of its National Agent at the disposal of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee to assist in the necessary secretarial work. Organisation for murder was the natural task of parliamentarism. Remember this inevitable toadying to Moloch when next some parliamentarian tells you that parliamentarism is opposed to violence.

Parliamentarism is practical. Because it is practical it stands for capitalism, for war, for misery, for continued class society, for mass subjection and exploitation. Naturally, and inevitably, it prepares the way for treachery, evolves from its agitators statesmen for the administration of capitalism, open and avowed enemies of working-class emancipation.

X. The Power of the Streets

The power of the streets has been travestied and mocked by the absurd mass demonstrations of the Communist Party. They have made the word "demonstration" the synonym of "meeting," and by making their demonstrations a daily occurrence have reduced them to a habit. Although people may be war-like, even in war-time battles require preparation and cannot take place daily. In addition, the mass struggles of a revolutionary epoch rise spontaneously and are not organised like parades or gala days. The trouble with the modern mass demonstrations is that the Communist Party organisers cannot distinguish between a revolutionary struggle and the political masquerade. Their manoeuvres are essentially reformist and parliamentary,

notwithstanding the seeming wildness of their slogans. Vulgarity, coarseness, and blackguardism are not necessarily revolutionary redguardism. This fact has been consistently overlooked by the Comintern with disastrous Fascist consequences in Italy, Germany, Hungary and Austria. This fact also has been taken into account by the parliamentarians, and has been used as a weapon against anti-parliamentarism and the true idea of mass direct action. The travesty notwithstanding, direct action and not parliamentarism is the final hope of the working class. Although the anti-parliamentary movement has broken down largely from the influence of poverty, parliamentarism does not express the salvation of the working class, and must be finally negated by the workers en masse. The trouble with anti-parliamentarism is not its want of truth but its inability to make contact with the mass of the workers. This inability is a deficiency that time will put right; but not even time, nor even eternity, could transform parliamentarism from being a bulwark of capitalist society into a class weapon of the working class. The workers' power rests outside of parliament and is industrial just as the capitalist power is above parliament and is financial. The capitalist power consists in the possession of surplus value. The workers' power consists in its ability to destroy or to stagnate surplus value. Parliament is merely a kind of armistice ground where the opposing forces agree to talk and compromise pending the approach to the critical struggle.

Aristide Briand, who was to become the miserable capitalist premier of France after he entered on a parliamentary career, put this point well when he made his famous speech for the defence before the jury at Yonne in 1903:—

"In general, history proves that the people never obtained anything except what they have taken, or could have taken themselves. This is also true of every particular case. Even apart from the periods of revolutions, it is always under the effect of menace—through a successful intimidation—that improvements in the condition of the people—step by step—have been granted. The power of persuasion, even when combined with that of circumstances, cannot suffice to dictate laws to the bourgeois class. And besides, were these laws created, would there be any security that they would be applied, if the sanction for their existence did not exist in the firmly founded and permanent revolutionary strength of the proletariat?"

It is only the effect of this menace, only the fear of the power of the revolutionary agitator outside Parliament, that persuades the capitalist press to tolerate the presence of Labour members inside. This is well known to every student of politics.

Bonar Law, as Tory Prime Minister, during the General Election of 1922, expressed the need for Labour members in Parliament in order to avert revolutionary activity and collapse of the capitalist system:—

"I think it would be a national misfortune if you made it more difficult to have Labour members in the House of Commons. It is a good education for the Labour members, and it is a good thing for the nation that a movement of that kind should be constitutional and be in the House of Commons."

Major Birchall, the Conservative member for N.E. Leeds, who published an occasional printed letter from Westminster to his constituents, backed this up. Describing the effect on the Commons of the Labour Party's speech-making in the debate on the address, February, 1923, he says:—

"Chief interest was attracted, as usual, by those who made the most noise —the Labour members. There have been several scenes, but no one was any the worse for the small explosions which occurred. These extreme men are much safer in the House of Commons than outside."

The Labour members respond anxiously to this idea. They also urge on Parliament the need for Parliament to do something for the down-and-out in order to avert social revolution. However often they advise the worker that revolution is impossible, they know and feel that it is not impossible. So do the Conservative reactionaries. Whatever division of interest is created by career-hunting, however much difference may exist between the extent that one is willing to palliate as opposed to the other, the Labour member and the Tory member are moved by a common dread. They are admittedly moved by fear of the consequences of anti-parliamentary agitation if nothing is done by Parliament.

Scrymgeour, the honourable member for Dundee, expressed this feeling in his maiden speech in the House of Commons in November, 1922, when he warned the Government of the strength of the anti-parliamentary feeling existing amongst the working-class in the following passage, which embodies the spirit of the entire speech:—

"I speak as one representing a most important industrial constituency in which there has been a very decisive change in its Parliamentary representation.. ..

"I want to say that there is a growing conviction amongst the vast body of the people in this country, and by that I mean the workers, that this House has unfortunately, altogether, irrespective of what Government is in power, been trifling with these gigantic issues. .. .

"I have had considerable experience in different parts of the country, more especially among the miners of Scotland, and I know there are forces growing amongst them which are absolutely convinced in regard to aggressive ideas and arguments which have been driven home in public debates by one whose name will be familiar to all in this House, I mean Mr. Guy Aldred.

"Mr. Aldred is a very able man, and he is desperately in earnest in every point which he drives home, and he was cheered to the echo when he denounced any belief in religion and when he was committing himself to the most drastic line of action, he was cheered by men and women on every point. I want Hon. Members to realise what that means. . . .

"I wish to emphasise that this House has not been grappling with these issues in the way that earnest working men and women feel they ought to be grappled with. With all due respect to those who officially represent the Labour Party, I have pointed out from my independent platform that there has been a growing feeling amongst the workers that the Labour Party has not been so aggressive or determined in carrying out their professions, and as the outcome of this there has been a growing feeling in favour of the Communist movement. My anxiety is that we should have some clear line of action laid down on this question in order to give proof to the workers that we mean business."

Is it not clear from this speech that the live political movement of the working class must be anti-parliamentary; that direct action sets the pace of all social reform; that Labour members speak from fear of street criticism; that Conservative members listen because talk in Parliament is less effective than the action it holds up, because parley is better than revolution for those who live on the backs of those who produce?

It may be said that something real might be achieved, that there would be less pandering if only the Labour members were in a majority at Westminster and were sure of the complete backing of the working-class as a class. It is said that revolutionists have done nothing at all for the people.

This pleading is very old, and reminds one of the very stupid speech made by Wilhelm Liebknecht long ago at the famous Erfurt Social Democratic Congress. We select two gems that sum up the entire apology of the parliamentarians—and destroy it with equal conciseness:—

"The fact that up to the present time we have got nothing from Social Democracy is not a valid objection to parliamentarism, but is simply due to our comparative weakness in the country among the people."

"What have the Anarchists done? Nothing, absolutely nothing."

It never occurred to W. Liebknecht to think, although his failure to do so is criminal in face of his one-time revolutionary activity and fearlessness, nor does it occur to modern parliamentarians to reflect, that, if the Anarchists or anti-parliamentarians, achieve nothing by anti-parliamentarism, and the parliamentarians achieve nothing by parliamentarism, honours are easy between the two factions. Again, if the explanation is the weakness of Socialist thought amongst the workers, the cure is Socialist agitation.

Such weakness may explain the failure of parliamentarism. It only emphasises the case for anti-parliamentarism. If Parliament can do nothing for the people until their consciousness compels Parliament to do something, until it becomes dangerous and unsafe for the Parliament not to do it, the popular demand actually dictating the nature and extent of the parliamentary alleviation, it only means that Parliament can do nothing for the people that they cannot do for themselves. Parliamentary activity, therefore, becomes unnecessary. It is even a weakness and aggravation undermining the power of the streets. It withdraws to the parliamentary arena men and women who should be working and agitating directly amongst the workers on the field of production, spreading the gospel at the street-corner, in the lecture hall, and wherever the workers assemble to consider and discuss.

Parliamentary agitation explains the failure of revolutionary thought to translate itself into achievement. It trades on that failure. Parliamentarism empties the proletariat of all power, all authority, all initiative, and then complains that parliamentarism cannot succeed because the proletariat is bankrupt of energy and understanding.

The great difference between parliamentarism and anti-parliamentarism consists in their respective attitudes towards this weakness of Socialist thought and feeling among the proletariat. The parliamentarians make it their mean apology, their paltry excuse, for attempting nothing whilst comporting themselves as members of the ruling class. The anti-parliamentarians make it *their apology* for untiring agitation, for the developing of *a constructive sense of power* among the proletariat. The parliamentarians become imperialists by virtue of proletarian ignorance, and the anti-parliamentarins spread Socialism the more zealously.

And which is right?

Says the anti-Socialist *Common Sense* of Edinburgh, in its issue for August, 1923:—

> "**We make no apology for returning to the topic of open-air propaganda. The more we see of it the more convinced are we of its importance. If Scotland is to be saved from Socialism, the bulk of the work will have to be done** at the street corners, and we will require to send there the most intelligent and the most highly educated speakers we can commend. . . . **Hitherto we have been obsessed with the idea that our best speakers should be reserved for inside work.** That is wrong. **No competent general would select his weakest troops to assault his enemy's 'key position.'** The 'key position' of modern political warfare in Scotland is the street corner."

Of course the "key position" is the street corner. Fashions may be descended from the great to the vulgar, until they are lost in the gutter. But opinion rises from the gutter to the great, until it becomes a platitude of social existence. For in things that matter, given the time to accomplish that which should be accomplished, the vulgar are the masters of the great. Wealth *may* parade its small talent, but poverty *must* impose its genius.

It is well for anti-Socialism to send its *best* men to the street corner. We will rout it the sooner. Anti-Socialism must first discover a case. It must answer the menace of social revolution with a better apology than a slum. But the answer, for good or for ill, must be made on the street, in terms of fact, and not of words only.

It must be confessed that anti-parliamentarism has reduced itself to a school of thought and so cannot make this answer in terms of fact and action on the street. No school of thought can do that. Only the workers as a class can accomplish this desirable end. The Socialist's task is to pursue whatever course will enable the workers to come together for class direct action. Equally with the parliamentarian, the anti-parliamentarian has failed to address himself to this task.

XI. The Meaning of Labour Parliamentary Success

In *The Commune* I collected the Socialist poems and prose writings of William Morris and circulated them for a penny. *In Pioneers of Anti-Parliamentarism* I summarised Morris's views on Parliamentarism. Morris lasted the distance as an anti-Parliamentarian only a few years. But he wrote clearly and effectively, repented not so much his opinions as his loneliness. The space at my disposal in this pamphlet does not permit me to devote to Morris's views that full statement that their clear exposition by the great revolutionary pioneer merit. For an Englishman of the bourgeoise order, Morris was a really wonderful man. This pamphlet would be incomplete, indeed, if it omitted all reference to his wisdom.

Depicting the true nature of Labour Parliamentary success, Morris wrote wise words to Bruce Glasier, impeaching the very Labourism of which Glasier, under Keir Hardie's unfortunate influence, became an agent. Morris might have been writing of the Labour Opposition of 1922 or of the Labour Government of 1924 in the following passage:

"And in any case, their present successes are won at the expense of withdrawing real Socialism from view in favour of mere palliation or reform."

In another letter to Glasier he summed up his opposition to Parliamentary action—and to Labourism—in words of merciless censure on the Labour brand of Parliamentary adventurer:—

"We should treat Parliament as the representative of the enemy: we might, for some definite purpose, be forced to send members to Parliament as rebels: but under no circumstances to help to carry on the Government of the country."

Morris was wrong to imagine that anyone could sit in Parliament as a rebel. I mean actually sit in Parliament, day by day, and never become corrupted. To sit in Parliament is to develop a counter-revolutionary status. At some time of tremendous crisis, and because the mass of the workers would have it no other way, William Morris's idea might work out. But the occasion would have to be critical, and the struggle sharp and decisive. Its culmination would need to be the revolution and its setting complete unity on the streets or in the workshops. The purpose served would have to be symbolic of the struggle, like the famous Tennis Court Oath of the French Revolution. I can conceive of no other circumstances or conditions under which Morris's conception of rebellious membership of the House of Commons

could be realised. Truth to tell, even then, allowing for every element of democratic effect, I do not much like the idea. I cannot disabuse my mind of the fact that Parliament does not express the true democracy or power of the working class. I do not wish to impose anti-Parliamentarism on the workers. I accept the theory of working class power. And if the workers must exhaust Parliament before they tumble for action into the streets, democracy bids me respect the fact. But it spells drawn-out tragedy, mockery, and debacle. It is all very saddening and horrible. With every respect for democracy, and every regard for the memory of William Morris, I must write the truth: Parliament is no place for rebels.

The Victor Graysons flash in and flash out, serving no purpose whatever. The Keir Hardies pioneer Labour Governments. But the need for Socialism and the struggle towards Socialism continues. Morris defined the position in an interview with Glasier in words that scorn the Parliamentarian, and expose the latter's ineffectiveness:

"I call myself a Revolutionary Socialist because I aim at a complete revolution in social conditions. I do not aim at reforming the present system but at abolishing it: and I aim, therefore, not at reforms, either on their own account or as a means of bringing about Socialism as the eventual outcome of a series of palliations and modifications of capitalistic society."

In brief, one must choose between Socialism and Parliament; between "all for the cause" and "all for one's self."

The evolution of Aristide Briand is but a study in this logic of Parliamentarism. His career is an anti-Parliamentary commentary. It is but one of many.

Speaking at the Nantes Trade Union Congress in 1894, Briand said:—

"'We must make use of the ballot-box,' some of you will say. Quite right! I am no opponent of the ballot-box. But on the day when universal suffrage becomes a nuisance and a menace to the governing class, they will do away with it. And in an emergency they will even have the workers shot down."

Speaking in the Chamber of Deputies, as Premier of France, on October 29, 1910, the same Briand defended the methods he employed to suppress the French Railway Strike in the following terms:—

"If the Government had not found in the law a possibility of defending the existence of the nation when the country was in danger, if we could not have protected the frontier line of France by legal methods, then, gentlemen, we would have assured the running of the railways which are necessary to France's defence by methods which are illegal. It would have been our duty."

The illegal defence of capitalist interests is the natural product of Parliamentarism. Marx destroys once and for all the case for Parliamentarism when he shows in his *Civil War in France* that the issue in the social conflict is between the Empire and the Commune. Written in 1871 to criticise and to depict the struggle of the Paris Commune, this work shows how the State Power originated from the days of absolute monarchy, and how the placing of the Government under Parliamentary control was placing it "under the direct control of the propertied classes." All which trenchant criticism leads Marx to utter his final challenge to Parliamentary Socialism, of which he was very proud: "But the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machinery and wield it for its own political purposes."

Marx shows how political changes have occurred "simultaneously with economic changes in society," and depicts the State power as the national engine of class despotism, a public force organised for the social enslavement of labour by capital. He proves, as did Daniel De Leon later, despite all his talk about the civilised plane, by inexorable economic logic, that universal suffrage can never lead the workers to victory, can never emancipate them from the shackles of wage-slavery.

History shows how right are these anti-Parliamentarian conclusions. Parliamentary power was conceded to the people only to avert revolution, a toy to keep the noisy children quiet. Just as children play at Dick Turpin in order to keep out of mischief, the common people were to vote in order not to rule. Parliamentary power was developed, under the constant pressure of street or revolutionary agitation, but it was extended only to accomplish the slow assassination of their power of action.

One needs but to study the wonderful message of Paris, the Paris of the Great French Revolution, to discover how Parliament outrages and betrays the struggle of the people. The National Assembly, the Convention, the Safety Committees, the Directory—a consistent Parliamentary debacle, a natural evolution, ending in Napoleon and Empire and the tragedy of French Imperialism. The Commune and the Sections, Proletarian and Anti-Parliamentary Institutions, serving the people, strangled by order of the Bourgeois Democracy and Parliamentarism, shopkeeper politics.

For the Assembly and the Conventions were representative institutions. Here was the Parliament that betrayed and assassinated the rights of the people. The Commune and the Sections were not representative institutions. They were the people themselves—the forums of discussions and decision. From them proceeded the life of the revolution. History places the forum not on a level with Parliament, but above it.

The living and imperishable record of the people's struggle proves that the people had but to resolve, but to realise their claims in thought, to more than realise them, in fact, as Paris did in those years of heroic striving. True, oratory reached a high level in both Assembly and Convention. But it was only in response to the demands of the Commune and the Sections who would stand no halting phrases, and insisted on the oratory of the Rights of Man, of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

How the Parliamentarians sought to delay the triumph of the Republic! How they laboured to preserve the Monarchy! And when the Monarchy fell of its own worthlessness, when in rage and anger Commune and Sections urged its abolition, when in fear and trembling the legislators bowed before the storm, then was invented the grotesque and tremendous sham that prepared the way for Napoleon and Empire —the Republic One and Indivisible!

The idea seems magnificent, does it not? The Monarchy is dead—long live the Republic One and Indivisible!

And then the Republic begins to think for the people, to feel for the people, and to act for the people. At last it calls itself "the people" and wars on the people. It proclaims martial law and pro-

ceeds to deprive the Commune and the Sections of arms and the power to resist the Central Authority. It denies Equality of Fact and proclaims a false and metaphysical equality before the law. It crushes the life of the people, the power of spontaneous revolt, of immediate vital action in the departments, and substitutes representative action, uncontrolled decrees, oligarchic and bureaucratic committees, all leading to misery, terror, and Empire. All that was Republican was destroyed by the Republic One and Indivisible! If only it had been Multiple and Divisible! If only the Republic had been Federal, drawing its vitality from the Commune, the Sections and the Primary Assemblies, instead of deriving its authority from a stagnating life-destroying Central Enacting Authority. Then it would have been a Republic of Fact, of Life and Reality; a true Republic, One and Indivisible!

So that the Parliamentarism destroyed the Revolution and the Republic. It neither served nor conceived it. It preserved the Republic much as the Church preserved the teachings of Jesus. Much as the rats preserve for their nests the manuscripts of Genius. Parliamentarism secures political democracy much as the General Council of the Trade Union Congress secures industrial democracy—secures it in slavery!

Parliamentarism has always meant the same.

XII. Parliament and the Unemployed

Writing with much dignity and wisdom, in the columns of *The Lion* for April 4, 1828—that is, four years before the Reform Act was passed—on the subject of Parliament and unemployment, Richard Carlile said:—

"We were in the House of Commons on Tuesday night last, as political spies, to spy out the nakedness of the legislative land. More than one half of the evening was occupied in a detail, by petition, of the distresses of the country. . . . Our impressions were, on observing the presentation of all these petitions about distress, an inquisition as to their origin and foundation.

"Whence, thought we, but from the Constitution of this House, jointly with that of the House of Lords, can originate the causes of all these distresses?

"Each of those gentlemen who received petitions from the many thousands of distressed people of the country, went, from the slight and trifling consideration of these petitions, from that House to a home that was comparative y a splendid palace, in relation to the huts and hovels, and foul chambers, or no chambers, of the distressed petitioners.

"Are these a class of men, thus constituted as legislative body, thought we, to take into proper consideration, and properly to feel for the distresses of which they talk, but for the remedy of which they do nothing, because they can do nothing without lessening their immediate advantages?

"No, we thought, and we speak it, that the cause of all the distresses mentioned was in the House of Commons itself, as an imperfect legislature. Every petition setting forth distress was, in fact, the reception of a written reproach on that House."

And here are two excerpts, on the same subject, culled from the daily press for June 29, 1925.

The first is taken from the Glasgow *Evening Times* London Letter column:—

"The whirligig of politics is responsible for the reversal of roles that is taking place in the unemployment debate to-day, as compared with a year ago. To-day Labour is moving a motion of no confidence on the ground that the Conservative Administration has failed to take measures to deal with an unemployment situation of 'unprecedented gravity.' A year ago the Conservatives were moving to reduce the salary of Mr. Tom Shaw, then Minister of Labour, because of the Labour Government's lack 'of any sort of policy to provide work for unemployed.' That is how the game at Westminster goes on. In turn they blame one another, and all the time the unemployment gets worse rather than better"

The second is taken from the *Daily Chronicle*, London:—

"The Labour Party's vote of censure on the Government for its failure to deal with unemployment will come before the House of Commons to-day. As between the movers and Ministers there is little to choose. It is a case of Satan rebuking sin. The Conservative Cabinet's lack of resource in the matter has been deplorable. But the Labour Cabinet's record last year was not a whit better."

One other issue, on which the Labour Party in Opposition, and the Labour Party in office, created a complete *volte face*, was the *Army Annual Act*. This scandal, this inevitable scandal of Parliamentarism, was treated of fully in the columns of the *Commune*. Readers should read the *Commune* reports, or Hansard for April, 1923, and April, 1924.

The conclusion from these facts is obvious. Parliamentarism cannot serve the working class in its struggle towards emancipation.

XIII. Parliamentarism: 1832-1924

The Republican influences of the French Revolution on British politics were partly arrested by the Napoleonic War, and after that, when the misery of 1816 onwards threatened to revive them, by the struggle against borough-mongering for the enfranchisement of the industrial centres. This cumulated, after much rioting and imprisonment, in the Reform Act of 1832. John Scott, Earl of Eldon, sometime Lord Chancellor, who fought bitterly against the Reform Bill of 1831-2, maintained that democracy was incompatible with monarchy, but reconciled himself to the Reform Act with the words: *"I care not who rules, provided our system of Government can be preserved."*

The low position of citizenship that appertained to Labour thought and struggle at this time is evidenced by the fact that William Godwin, famed for writing "Political Justice," and being the centre of a famous "intellectual" circle was honoured, in 1834, by receiving an appointment as Gentleman Usher!

Kropotkin traces the evolution of the Anarchist idea. He cites Locke, the timid, and Godwin, the Whig, and considers the latter the father of English Anarchism. Although we appreciate Godwin's thought, we rank him as inferior to Richard Carlile, whose reward for clear thinking was imprisonment. Godwin was but a politician for all practical purposes, and regarded his own theories as pleasant utopianism. And he was made a gentleman usher as a warning against thinking at all. This was two years after the working-class struggle against borough-mongering had secured the passage of the capitalist Reform Act whereby representation was won for the capitalist class in opposition to the landed interest.

Justin M'Carthy, by no means a revolutionary, depicts the situation well when he states in his *History of Our Own Times*, that

"that was all the more exasperating because the excitement and agitation and success of the Reform Bill was brought about by the working men. They came round to the belief that they had been made tools of by the capitalists, and when the Reform Bill became law they were thrown over by those whom they had helped to pass it."

The same author tells us:—

"It was thirty years before the people secured Household Suffrage, and they only secured it in 1867 because the classes feared a revolution."

During this period Chartism developed, whilst Liberalism triumphed. In nine Parliaments elected from 1832 to 1865, the Liberals had a

majority in eight. But the franchise was extended by a coalition headed by Disraeli, partly to dish the Liberals, and from fear of the rising temper of the common people, not from sincere conviction. Politicians have no sincere convictions.

Vince, in his *Life of the Late John Bright*, says:—

"The statesmen of the Liberal Party still were scarcely less disinclined to reform than their Conservative competitors. Both parties regarded reform as an inevitable event of the future: both were anxious not to anticipate the necessity: yet both were eager to intercept the credit of being the first to yield to the popular will so soon as it should become obviously irresistible."

The evolution of Labourism demonstrates the truth of this comment. Fifteen years after Godwin became a gentleman usher, Samuel Bamford, the Radical weaver who had played a not undistinguished part at Peterloo and in the franchise agitation, was signally rewarded by being made doorkeeper at Somerset House! This was the answer to the Chartist agitation when Liberalism was at its zenith. In 1906, when Labourism evolved, the answer of Liberalism was to place John Burns in the Cabinet! Thus the political importance of the Labour Leader evolved; but the social position of the workers remained unaltered.

From 1855 to 1875 Liberalism triumphed. The workers passively and actively adhered to the capitalist industrial regime, and sought only technically to improve it. Gladstone grew alive to the growing economic and political importance of the Trade Union leaders. As pointed out in earlier chapters, in 1873 to 1874, following big industrial disputes, working men entered Parliament, for the first time, as working men. Their class consciousness meant nothing more important than a technical idea of maintaining their true status within the system. But their elevation commenced the decline of Liberalism. Labour ideas had already passed from doorkeeping at Somerset House to sitting on the back benches at Westminster.

The collapse of the Commune gave birth to Parliamentary Socialism. "Nationalisation" now became a political catch-phrase, and John Burns, as 'the man with the Red Flag," blossomed into fame in 1884 as the champion of Labour against Liberalism. Gladstone answered the challenge by making Henry Broadhurst, the ex-workman, an Under-Secretary of State. Six years later, Thomas Burt, to arrest the decline of Liberalism, was made Parliamentary Secretary. The promotion merely cost Burt his reputation. Keir Hardie and Burns were returned to Parliament, and Hardie set about evolving parliamentarism. The Labour Representative Committee was evolved in 1900, Labour members were returned to the Commons, and in 1906 the Labour Party, with the programme of Labourism, became a force in politics. Liberalism replied by promoting John Burns to Cabinet rank.

Virtually, this ended Liberalism, although the war arrested the actual demise. In the working-class movement, on the other hand, "Labourism" destroyed "Socialism," and so Labour Parliamentarism evolved to its triumph and its doom in 1924. "The Lib-Labs of 1910 have become the Lab.-Libs. of 1924," wrote Alderman Kirk in the *Daily Herald*. He was right. With as much advantage to the workers in their struggle as if they had remained the Lib-Labs of 1910. Such is the benefit and progress of Labourism! In the light of current experi-

ence, it is simple for the workers to estimate the worth of Labour's parliamentary triumphs to the persistent daily working class struggle.

XIV. The I.L.P., Parliamentarism and MacDonaldism

Because the I.L.P. has changed its attitude towards the Labour Party, it cannot escape responsibility for the tragedy of Parliamentarism, especially its manifestation of MacDonaldism. The I.L.P. has stressed how slight was the difference between Labourism and MacDonaldism at the time of the National Government rupture in 1931. The difference between the I.L.P. and Labour Parliamentarism is equally slight. Only tremendous political courage and clear revolutionary purpose can atone for the I.L.P.'s past responsibility for the Parliamentary debacle.

The I.L.P. attitude towards Ramsay MacDonald during the period that he was rising to Premiership, and after his attainment of his office, was most unsatisfactory.

In the second chapter of this work, I cited from Ramsay MacDonald's book, *Parliament and Revolution*, his confession as to the futility and non-proletarian character of Parliament. But its author was not led to oppose Parliament through his clear understanding of its uselessness. On the contrary, the great interest of his book was the way in which it presented in complete and definite shape the author's views on such an important subject as Parliament and Revolution. He attacked Revolution as "the road of maximum difficulty," and made the coming of Revolution attendant on a series of "ifs":—"If the bankruptcy ends the present order in disaster and disgrace, if the meanness of mind of our politicians . . . if prices of commodities keep high and life becomes harder, if we continue to be made the prey of profiteers and plunderers . . . if the mind of the mass is the subject of daily misrepresentation in a contemptible press, and if the desire of the best thought of democracy to find expression and to be consulted as a responsible authority is thwarted by tricksters and cheap jacks, then Labour troubles will become chronic, restlessness will defy reason, anarchy will spread, and social cohesion will be destroyed" *Etc., ad nauseum.*

Here we have a picture of the outlook of His Majesty's Labour Government! The "Socialists" are to perpetuate misery and remain hired apologists of capitalism until bankruptcy ends it all. Then they are to change their coats, doff their court uniforms, resume their red ties, and lead the Revolution! Whatever happens, so long as they endure no suffering, and take no risks, the Parliamentarians must lead. Leadership—talk—parade—pretence: such is their creed!

MacDonald made this confession of faith in 1920. On May 29 of that year, John M'Lure wrote in the *Forward* a two-column article, declaring:—

"The I.L.P. is on Right Lines.

"Organised Labour, guided by Socialist Principle, is the only hope. All else is illusion."

This article attacked "the doctrinaire Unitarians," denounced "Academic Socialism," and avowed:—

"Working class organisation is growing in strength and in character. Industrially it is gradually moving in terms of class; politically it has lost all faith in parties other than its own—the Labour Party! . . . We may assign different reasons for the growth of the working class movement, or we may lay different stress on the same reasons. Some of us may magnify the importance of economic organisation, others may exaggerate the value of political activity: but all must realise that the evolution of capitalism has created a working class whose action is determined by the economic antagonisms inherent in the system. The day-to-day struggle has developed in that working class movement an indefinitely increasing power that steadily goes forward to the task of transforming the entire social system."

I am not questioning the general accuracy of this statement. I am only urging that it identified the I.L.P. with the Labour Party and Ramsay MacDonald's outlook. The I.L.P. continued identified with the Labour Party until after the Blackpool Conference of March, 1932, and with Ramsay MacDonald, until he himself repudiated the I.L.P. in 1926. The I.L.P. identified itself with MacDonald actively and aggressively during the disastrous career of the 1924 Labour Government. MacDonald attended the York I.L.P. 1924 Conference as a delegate, and addressed a meeting in connection with it, at the Theatre Royal, York, on Saturday, April 19th, 1924. In his speech, he commented on the familiar statement that the Labour Government was in office but had no power. He declared that this dictum was false. "Whoever is in office," he asserted, "has opportunity, and opportunity is always power."

At this Conference, MacDonald had the audacity to add that the infamous experts scheme for exacting tribute from conquered Germany was "Europe's chance." "Finish the job, and bring peace and security to Europe," he added, in eulogy of this scheme which developed Fascism in Germany, and brought starvation and unemployment to a quarter of a million British miners and their families.

The I.L.P. supported him notwithstanding this terrible responsibility for the misdeeds of capitalism he imposed upon the shoulders of the Parliamentary Socialists.

As Prime Minister, MacDonald spent more time at Chequers, the luxurious country house of the Premier in Buckinghamshire, than any other Prime Minister since the establishment of Chequers as an official residence. The I.L.P. uttered no word of criticism.

In this same year, 1924, Ramsay MacDonald unsaid in action what he had proclaimed in speech nine years before. In 1915, during the debate in Parliament on the Munitions of War Bill, MacDonald moved an amendment withholding the power to extend the scope of the Bill to other trades by Royal Proclamation, and insisting that such extensions should only be made "by resolution of the House of Commons." He said, according to the *Labour Leader* of July 8, 1915, that *"he had a very rooted objection to legislation by proclamation. He did not want to limit the power of the Minister of Munitions to prevent strikes, but that power ought only to be exercised with the consent of Parliament."*

It is interesting to remember that the Emergency Powers Act can only be put into force by Royal Proclamation. In 1924, a Royal Proclamation against the striking workers was issued by order of

MacDonald, the rooted objection having meanwhile mysteriously disappeared.

On March 23rd, 1925, MacDonald paid a most flowery tribute to the memory of Marquis Curzon, in a speech in the House of Commons. That speech was reported fully and commented on in the *Commune* for May, 1925. A large number of Labour members were present in the House supporting MacDonald when he made his fulsome speech in memory of an enemy of the working class and one of the most imperial devastators of the world. The Glasgow I.L.P. members who supported him were Maxton, Campbell Stephen, and Wheatley.

I am not suggesting that these three members were pleased to acquiesce silently in this eulogy. But they were present; they were silent; maybe trapped into silence; and they never afterwards protested. Their failure was due to their parliamentarism. Party allegiance and political organisation had demoralised their Socialism.

When Sir Eyre Crowe, Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, died at Swanage on April 28, 1925, Ramsay MacDonald had paid a special tribute to his memory. Crowe entered the Foreign Office as Resident Clerk forty years before his death, but was not honoured until 1911. He then received the K.C.M.G. for his work at the Hague Tribunal, when he persuaded the Court to abolish the Right of Political Asylum. He purchased his honour by the assassination of a human right and the condemnation to terrible torture of the Indian patriot, Savarkar. I dealt with this outrage fully in leaflets and in articles published in *Justice*, *Freewoman*, and *Herald of Revolt*. As a result my writings were proscribed in India by official proclamation. I have no doubt that Crowe was an able civil servant. But what a man for a Labour Prime Minister to praise. And the dull and dreamy I.L.P. uttered no word of protest. Indeed, it was not the I.L.P. that criticised MacDonald, but MacDonald who criticised the I.L.P.

There was a general anticipation that, following MacDonald's criticisms, the 1926 Easter Conference of the I.L.P. would witness acrid discussion and heated scenes, with charges and counter-charges. But MacDonald elected to stay away, and there was little disposition among the delegates to turn the Conference into an anti-MacDonald demonstration. Tom Johnston and Campbell Stephen stressed the point that if the rank and file in the country were keen and militant the spirit of revolt would be reflected on the back benches and the front benches, and in the leadership of the Labour Party in the House of Commons. James Maxton, elected Chairman of the Party, declared, in the *Forward*, for April 10, 1926, that the I.L.P.'s duty was to keep the ultimate ideals of Socialism clearly before the working class movement and the country. It must be confessed that down to the time of this declaration the I.L.P. had not pursued its duty with any marked success.

The I.L.P. Chronicle, No. 12, December, 1923, edited by A. Fenner Brockway, as national secretary, and issued *for private circulation only*, commented on the 1923 General Election:—

"The issue was Capitalism v. Socialism. In many such fights we won, but these defeats should warn us that much propaganda work has still to be done. Before long clean-cut fights on Socialism against united opponents will be the rule. We must prepare the electorate for that time. . . .

"The next election will be fought on Socialism. If it is to be won tremendous educational work will have to be done, by literature, by meetings, by press activity."

This interesting item of "information" was signed with Brockway's initials. We wonder if Brockway, when he wrote in this vein of glib humour, really understood the difference between Socialism and Capitalism, or had even a glimmering of the real issue between the workers and their oppressors. Was he any better informed than his Labour opponent at Upton in 1934, who in 1923 was his I.L.P. colleague.

Those workers who look up Hansard and wish to follow the voting of the I.L.P. members as distinct from the other Labour members during the "life" of the 1924 MacDonald Government, should note that the I.L.P. representation in the Commons was: 6 Cabinet Ministers, 9 Under-Ministers, and 30 "back-benchers."

The I.L.P. back-benchers included James Maxton (Bridgeton), Rev. Campbell Stephen (Camlachie), J. Gardiner (Hammersmith N.), Major A. G. Church (Leyton E.), John Scurr (Mile End), Dr. Somerville Hastings (Reading), B. W. Gardner (Upton), W. H. Ayles (Bristol), D. Williams (Swansea), R. C. Wallhead (Merthyr-Tydvil).

The I.L.P. members of the Cabinet were:—Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Ramsay MacDonald; Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Snowden; Minister of Health, John Wheatley; President of the Board of Trade, Charles Philip Trevelyan; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Colonel Josiah Wedgewood.

J. R. Clynes, who was Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons in the 1924 Cabinet, was formerly a member of the I.L.P., but left that body to become a Cabinet Minister in war-time in furtherance of capitalist war.

Space does not permit of the mention of all the Under-Secretaries of State, the Parliamentary Secretaries, etc., that were part of the MacDonald Government, but without enjoying Cabinet rank. The following were members of the I.L.P., and represented, therefore, what Brockway terms the "extreme" (*sic*) propaganda left of Parliamentary "Socialism," the actual propaganda organisation of parliamentarism:—

I.L.P. UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE.

Foreign Office—ARTHUR PONSONBY. Constituency—Brightside.
War Office—Major C. R. ATTLEE. Constituency—Limehouse.
Air Office—WILLIAM LEACH. Constituency—Bradford (Central).

I.L.P. PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES.

Board of Education—MORGAN JONES. Constituency—Caerphilly.
Treasury—BEN. CHARLES SPOOR. Constituency—Bishop Auckland.
Pensions—J W. MUIR. Constituency—Maryhill.

OTHER I.L.P. MINISTERS.

W. GRAHAM (Edinburgh)—Financial Secretary and Lord Commissioner of the Treasury.
E. SHINWELL (Linlithgow)—Secretary, Mines Department, Board of Trade.
J. STEWART (St. Rollox)—Scotland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health.

This means, as has been indicated clearly in this chapter, that the I.L.P. had a total Ministerial representation of 15 in the 1924 Government.

It required five years of opposition, the experience of the second MacDonald Labour Government of 1929-1931, and the rise of the National Government to inspire the I.L.P. with a clearer outlook. At

long last, the Blackpool I.L.P. Conference in March, 1932, adopted a new statement of policy as regards its relations with the Labour Party. The conference was reported in the *New Leader* for April 1, 1932, under the title *Away with Graduation*, by John Paton. That conference decided on constitutional affiliation, the conditions being:—(1) The right to advocate Socialism inside the bigger movement; (2) the right to maintain in Parliament the distinctive fighting Socialist attitude.

Later, a definite disaffiliation policy was adopted, and Paton resigned first his secretaryship, and then his membership of the Party.

It is interesting to note how, in 1929, when the I.L.P. decided to protest against the war-policy of the Second Labour Government, Paton explained the entire protest away. In the *Daily Herald* for April 10, 1929, John Paton, as National Secretary of the I.L.P., declared that the I.L.P. resolution to vote against war credits meant nothing. Replying to Sir Laming Worthington-Evans' "dishonest suggestion" that the Labour Party "might not vote credits for the fighting services," Paton vigorously repudiated the suggestion that the I.L.P. resolution "could be forced upon the Labour Party and become the policy of a Labour Government." The resolution was only "the statement of a principle," and no "Labour Government could or would accept a policy of immediate disbandment of the armed forces." Which makes the I.L.P. resolution just so much hypocrisy.

The I.L.P. Disaffiliationists opened their campaign in Glasgow on Sunday, August 21, 1932, at the Coliseum. John M'Govern said that "the I.L.P. and its leaders are going to take the lead of the working classes in this country from those who have betrayed the Labour Party during their two years of office. . . . We are fighting with the Labour Party because there is a fundamental difference between the leaders of the Labour Party and the leaders of the I.L.P. . . . those who are interested in the good name and the prestige of the working class movement must divorce themselves, at the earliest possible moment, from the wider Labour movement."

Councillor Carmichael, George Buchanan, and James Maxton spoke at this meeting.

Eight days later, Maxton addressed a meeting in the Kinning Park Town Hall. Defining his attitude, he declared that the political work of the I.L.P. in Parliament and local councils had been carried on from 1900 to 1932 within the wider organisation of the Labour Party. It was now proposed to continue the work for Socialism with the I.L.P. standing on its own, as they had to do from 1893 to 1900, before the existence of the Labour Party.

From 1929 to 1931, the Labour Party at Westminster had tried to make itself and others vote in flagrant contradiction to their Socialistic principles, but he always cast his vote in *as close conformity to those principles*, to the party programme, and to the promises given to his constituents as was humanly possible to do.

The workers would only reach their goal when they had a united movement, but they had first of all to decide for what it was that they were united. It was easy to achieve unity if there were no belief and no faith, and they must make up their minds what principles they were

going to be united on, and towards what objects their unity was directed. From his experience in the Labour Party he had learned that, so far from the I.L.P. converting the Labour Party to Socialism, the Labour Party had knocked the Socialism out of a large number of I.L.P.-ers who joined its ranks. They had to start again to make Socialists.

Socialism could not be achieved by instalments. The working class had to obtain power of the entire economic machine—before they were at the beginning of creating a Socialist Society.

At the Conference of the Scottish Division I.L.P. in Glasgow, in January, 1933, John Pollok, in his presidential address, said that the I.L.P. might have cut the painter much earlier than 1932. The attitude of the Labour leaders during the war, after the formation of the first Labour Government and in the premature calling off of the General Strike in 1926, had provided sufficient reason for disaffiliation. Many of those in control in 1914, 1924, and 1926 were still in control.

This prepared the way for the debacle of Upton and Merthyr.

In the General Election of 1929 the figures were:—

Mr. B. W. Gardner (Lab.)	14,703
Mr. M. Morgan (U.)	9,681
Mr. W. J. Austin (Lib.)	5,607
Labour Majority	5,022

At this election, Gardner also stood as a member of the I.L.P., and was supported by that body, notwithstanding the record of the 1924 Labour Government, which he had supported.

At the 1931 election, in a straight fight against the Tory candidate, Gardner was defeated by 5,108.

Polling took place in the 1934 By-Election on May 14. The result was as follows:—

B. Gardner (Lab.)	11,998
J. R. J. Macnamara (Con.)	8,534
F. Brockway (I.L.P.)	748
Majority	3,464

Fenner Brockway lost his deposit.

Gardner was M.P. for Upton from 1923 till 1924 and from 1929 till 1931. He had been on the local council as an I.L.P. member since 1906. He remained a member of the Independent Labour Party until the split of 1931 to 1932.

These facts illustrate the unsatisfactory nature of the I.L.P. case against him. Brockway issued a leaflet entitled *Gardner's Black Record*, which was subsequently enlarged to include particulars of Gardner's and Brockway's votes on 28 issues, as given in the Official Proceedings of the House of Commons. I am not concerned with Brockway's votes, which were the direct opposite of Gardner's in each instance, and were, although sometimes merely pious as on the Army Reduction issue, in line with working class interest. Brockway's votes were right and Gardner's were wrong: but Gardner was a member of the I.L.P. as well as Brockway at the time of these votes, and he had been the life-long colleague of Keir Hardie and the leading I.L.P.-ers in West Ham.

Here are Gardner's votes as recorded by Brockway in his Upton election circular of 1934:—

VOTES AGAINST THE UNEMPLOYED.

1.—The May Committee and the Means Test.

On February 11, 1931, Ben Gardner voted for the resolution of Sir Donald MacLean, acting upon the notorious May Committee which recommended the Means Test and the cuts in Unemployment Benefits, Wages, and Social Services.

2.—Children of the Unemployed.

On December 2, 1929, Gardner voted against the allowance for the children of the unemployed being increased from 2/- to 5/-.

3.—Wives of the Unemployed.

On December 3, 1929, Gardner voted against the allowance for the wife of an unemployed man being raised from 9/- to 10/-.

4.—The Waiting Period.

On December 10, 1929, Gardner voted against the reduction of the Waiting Period (during which the unemployed receive no benefit) from six days to three days.

5.—Unemployed of 18.

On December 2, 1929, Gardner voted against full benefits being granted to unemployed persons at 18 instead of 21.

6.—Robbing Benefits from 250,000 Unemployed.

On July 8, 1931, Gardner voted for the Anomalies Act, against Maxton's resolution for its rejection. Brockway voted against it. Over 250,000 unemployed persons were subsequently deprived benefits under the Anomalies Act.

7.—Casual Workers' Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Ben Gardner, in opposition to a resolution of G. Buchanan, voted for the refusal of Benefits to Casual Workers when unemployed, under the Anomalies Act.

8.—Seasonal Workers' Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Ben Gardner, against the motion of Campbell Stephen, voted for the refusal of Benefits to Seasonal Workers when unemployed.

9.—Intermittent Workers' Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Ben Gardner, against the motion of E. Sandham, voted for the refusal of Benefits to the Intermittent Workers.

10.—Reductions of Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted in favour of a reduction of Benefits in the Unemployment Benefits of persons whose earnings and Benefits amounted to less than £250 a year.

11.—Refusal of Benefits Decided in Secret.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted in favour of the proceedings and votes of the Advisory Committee remaining secret. This Committee was given power to issue regulations controlling the payment of Unemployment Benefits under the Anomalise Act.

12.—Dictatorship over Unemployed Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted in favour of destroying the Parliamentary control of the conditions under which Unemployed Benefits were given or refused, and trans erring control to the secret Advisory Committee. Brockway voted in favour of Parliamentary control.

13.—Stopping Benefits.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted in favour of Margaret Bondfield's amendment to the Unemployment Insurance (No. 3) Bill, giving powers to stop the payment of benefits to certain classes of unemployed workers (including casual workers, seasonal workers, married women, etc.).

14.—Ex-Service Men.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted for the stopping of Benefits of ex-Service men, or men in receipt of pensions or workmen's compensation for injuries which prevented them from following their previous insurable employment.

15.—Married Women Workers.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted against Benefits for married women.

16.—Shop Assistants.

On July 21, 1931, Gardnre voted for the stopping of the Unemployment Benefits of seasonal Shop Assistants.

17.—Unemployed's Health Benefits.

On December 15, 1930, Gardner voted for the Government a Procedure Resolution which made no provision for the continuance of the Health Insurance rights of the unemployed during the Parliamentary Recess from December 30 to January 31.

VOTES AGAINST MINERS.

18.—Compensation for Miners.

On April 1, 1931, E. F. Wise moved that the coalowners should be compelled to compensate miners deprived of their employment by the closing down of mines as a consequence of the Coal Mines Act. Gardner voted against any compensation for the dismissed miners. This Act made provision for the compensation of the owners whose mines were closed down.

19.—Minimum Wage for Miners.

On February 11, 1930, Gardner voted against the National Coal Mining Board having power to fix a minimum wage for miners.

20.—£135 a Week for Capitalist Re-organiser.

On March 13, 1931, the Government made a proposal that Sir Ernest Gowers, Chairman of the -Mining Re-organisation Committee, should be paid a salary of £7,000 a year, with additional travelling and subsistance allowances. Gardner (who had voted against the minimum wage for miners) voted in favour of a salary of £135 15s. a week for Sir Ernest Gowers.

21.—Starve the Miners.

On July 23, 1930, Gardner, in opposition to R. C. Wallhead, voted for the appointment of Lord Hundson to the position of Chairman of the Public Works Loan Board. R. C. Wallhead drew attention to the fact that during the Miners' Lockout, Lord Hundson had said: "While the miners are our enemies we should not feed them. We did not feed the Germans, and I cannot for the life of me see why we should feed the miners."

WAR AND IMPERIALISM.

22.—War Preparations.

On March 10, 1931, Gardner voted against a reduction of the Armed Forces.

23.—Military Training of Upper Classes.

On March 24, 1930, Gardner voted for continuing Grants for the Military Training o the Youth at the Universities and Public Schools.

24.—Indian Prisoners.

On July 17, 1930, Ramsay MacDonald moved that Fenner Brockway be suspended from the House of Commons for five days. Brockway had protested against the imprisonment of Indians who were demanding Self-Government. Gardner voted in favour of Brockway's suspension.

OTHER ISSUES.

25.—Civil Servants' Cuts.

On February 26, 1931, Ramsay MacDonald moved the suspension for five days of W. J. Brown (Secretary of the Civil Servants' Clerical Association) because he insisted upon asking for time to debate the position of 300,000 men and women in the Civil Service affected by the cuts. Gardner voted for turning the Civil Servants' representative out of the House.

26.—Co-operative Societies.

On July 15, 1931, Gardner voted against the representation of the Co-operative Movement on the Committee responsible for preparing the Regulations under the Anomalies Act.

27.—Insult to Working Class Parents.

On November 11, 1930, Ramsay MacDonald moved that J. McGovern be suspended from the House of Commons for five days because he insisted on protesting against a statement by Mr. Womersley (Con.) to the effect that working class parents did not want their children educated to a higher age. Gardner voted for the suspension of McGovern.

28.—Socialism.

On October 31, 1930, Gardner voted against Jowett's amendment regretting that the King's Speech containecd no proposals for Socialist reorganisation of industry.

An Anti-Parliamentarian might denounce Jowett's amendment, but a Parliamentary Socialist has no excuse for opposing it. Jowett's purpose was to challenge Capitalism as an ambassador of the working-class. He ought to have been supported by every Labour M.P.

What the real Socialist would like to know is why the I.L.P. never detailed the facts against Gardner before. Why did it have to wait till 1934 and a By-Election?

West Ham was as closely connected with Keir Hardie's memory as Merthyr. Polling took place there on Wednesday, June 6, 1934, and the result was:—

S. O. Davies (Lab.) ...	**18,645**
Victor Evans (Lib.) ...	**10,376**
Campbell Stephen (I.L.P.)	**3,508**
W. Hannington (C.P.) ...	**3,409**

Both Campbell Stephen and Walter Hannington lost their deposits. Comment is unnecessary. The facts show that the I.L.P. supported MacDonaldism and Labourism too long and too consistently for its eleventh hour awakening to impress the workers.

The I.L.P. was well aware of MacDonald's sympathy with Toryism long before he became Labour's first Prime Minister and certainly before he became the National Premier: and it viewed all attacks on him as a slander of Parliamentary Socialism. The I.L.P. vigorously supported and defended Ramsay MacDonald in 1917, when in *Forward* for August 25 of that year, he revealed how little class understanding, how little sympathy with the task of working class emancipation, he possessed even in those years. Writing, as he then was, at the height of opposition to ruling class imperialism, he suggested that the Labour Party ought to end the Lloyd George Government and bring about a "Balfour-Asquith Government." He added:—

"After having written so much, I have heard Mr. Balfour's speech on diplomacy. It convinces me more than ever that a Balfour Government ought to be tried"

This, the most amazing suggestion that was ever advanced by an alleged responsible Labour representative or thinker, was made by MacDonald "*to avenge* the insults heaped upon Labour by the Coalition Government."

The later Labour, and still later, Tory, Premier, details the full story of *l'affaire* Henderson, and the door-mat episode:—

"There was the Labour Cabinet Minister waiting at the Cabinet door for an hour whilst Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Barnes discussed him. Then when they had finished, Mr. Barnes was commissioned, and accepted the commission, to inform his leader what had been decided. . . . I never believed that such a thing was possible. They do hold us cheap. And how deadly do they hit.

"The Minister at the door: the insult intensified by the action of his own colleague. . . . There we have Labour garlanded to be insulted . . . The other minor Labour Ministers remain unruffled at their posts.

"This will be a mean story for our children and our children's children to read. It is an introduction to the Labour Party in power which decent people will pass hurriedly through as a visitor to a fair city approaching it through a slum. . . .

"The Government refuses passports and the Labour members acquiesce. The passports are asked for in order that Labour may have something to say regarding the international situation. . . . What ought the Labour Party to do? To me its policy is plain. It ought to end this Government. What will then happen? A General Election? . . . But is another Government possible? Certainly. A combination between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Asquith has yet to be tried. . . .

"Would that make matters better? I do not know. It might and it might not. It could not be worse than the present Government, and in any event it will be a craven thing if the Labour Party lies down under the insults offered to it. . . ."

Then comes the sentence, eulogising Balfour's speech on diplomacy. Fenner Brockway and the I.L.P. enthusiastically supported Ramsay MacDonald, knowing his position, and then affected surprise at the result. By expressing surprise, and opposition, when opposition was too late, the I.L.P. leaders hoped to escape the charge of political bankruptcy, and to get away with the suggestion that their forty years' propaganda activity had been of value to the working class. It had been forty years' preparation for political disaster.

XV. Thomas Johnston.

The failure of the I.L.P. is established beyond doubt by the careerist rise of Thomas Johnston, M.P. He is Secretary of State for Scotland in the Churchill War Government. His utterances have been exposed in detail in the columns of *The Word*. As these exposures will be embodied in a separate pamphlet the story of his parliamentarian evolution does not call for comment here. Sir P. J. Dollan also employed the I.L.P. as a convenient elevator and through its medium established a smooth transition to fame as a capitalist Imperialist Militarist. These parliamentarians never evolve themselves into places of danger. They dodge the prison almost completely and escape the battlefield. They like the platform and sink naturally into the comfort of a Cabinet setting.

Whilst Johnston was evolving, the Anti-Parliamentarians were exposing his trend. The I.L.P. and the Parliamentarians would not listen. As a member of the I.L.P. and of the Labour Party Johnston failed to understand the real significance of Ramsay MacDonald's 1917 urge of support for a "Balfour-Asquith" Government. He was set in the same direction himself but the I.L.P. rank and file were assisting his *Forward* march. They certainly did not understand. Parliamentarism had destroyed their class-conscious understanding.

Thomas Johnston, by that time an M.P., wrote a small essay in the *Forward* for May 9, 1925, entitled "The Interpretation of Mr Ramsay MacDonald." This was a review of MacDonald's fugitive essays and sketches entitled *Wanderings and Excursions*. Johnston pays tremendous tribute to MacDonald's sincerity and vision, and it must be remembered that he pays this tribute as a member of the I.L.P., which he was at the time of writing, and with the complete endorsement of other members of the I.L.P., including James Maxton and Fenner Brockway. With the approval of these comrades, Johnston wrote:—

"Had Mr. Ramsay MacDonald not been a successful politician, he might have been the greatest descriptive journalist of his time. For he has in double measure the great gift of word artistry; the Celtic power of seeing two worlds; and that wide knowledge of literature and language which enables a seer to convey his mind pictures to others.

"Huge audiences gather round his platform while he weaves the magic of his prose poetry; in a non-offensive, but wholly honourable interpretation of the words, he is a spell-binder. . . .

"What artistry there is in his description of Jaures the Great sauntering up a street in Stuttgart. . . .

"Good, fine nervous prose in the best Stevenson manner surely is this. . . .

"And that is the dominant note that comes out to me from this medley in Mr. MacDonald's pages.

"The Covenanter, turned by strange wheel of chance Prime Minister, still looks out, austere, yet not at all without a certain grim humour, upon the majestic visions that flit across the face of the world; he lifts his eyes to the eternal hills and sees the power of God. The ruins of an auld kirk, or Bailie Nicol Jarvie's coulter, its tip painted crimson, that swings from the tree at Aberfoyle, Politics, Travel, Music, Learning.—All things are interpreted in terms of liberty and of spirit.

"And this collation, I take it, in turn interprets to us the man Ramsay MacDonald."

What became of the Covenanter? What happened to his majestic visions? And those "terms of liberty and spirit" were to be found in his Tory Sedition Bill? Does not the I.L.P. understand that the task of politics is to vision before, and not to denounce after, the event?

XVI. Communist Parliamentarism.

Campbell Stephen, who was opposed by the C.P. candidate, Walter Hannington, at Merthyr, despite "the United Front," objected to the I.L.P. alliance with the C.P. The minutes of the N.A.C. for August, 1933, record Campbell Stephen's statement that "the present policy of the I.L.P. was disastrous, and the I.L.P. was becoming a sub-committee of the Communist Party."

The futility of Communist Party parliamentarism was illustrated by the career of Saklatvala. Its impotence does not proceed from loyalty to abstract principles or revolutionary integrity. At Merthyr, the C.P. pandered to the Catholic vote, notwithstanding the Papal attack on Socialism. In the *Daily Worker* for May 30th, 1934, the reader was treated to the following headings:—

"TWO VETERANS ENTER MERTHYR ELECTION FIGHT.

Tom Mann and Mrs. Despard; Growing Enthusiasm For Communist Party."

It is impossible to conceive of more damnable pandering, coupled with more outrageous lying. The result is a commentary on the futility of this disgraceful opportunism.

The text of the reports, after describing one of Tom Mann's meetings, proceeds as follows:—

"A Further valuable addition to the forces will be Mrs. Despard who has just wired to say that she will arrive on Friday afternoon.

"There is a large Irish Catholic vote in the Merthyr constituency, computed to be somewhere about 12,000."

The light type is in the original. And we are told that the C.P. is a revolutionary organisation! This is the party that demanded that Brockway answer satisfactorily eleven questions to the satisfaction of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., as a condition of support at Upton! This party of panderers and time-servers, seeking the Catholic vote, and exploiting Mrs Despard, the one-time seeming Theosophist, and the all-the-time Catholic! Did not the same Communist Party exploit Jim Larkin until he repudiated Communism for Catholicism and avowed that he knew nothing about Communism, although Moscow had feted him as Ireland's leading Communist!

In April, 1934, the Upton and Merthyr I.L.P. results were anticipated by the North Hammersmith result, when the C.P. put up Bramley, and was supported by the I.L.P. During the election, the *Daily Worker* described how the local Trade Unionists were rallying to Bramley, and how there was to be a tremendous Communist vote. Then came the result. In the worst days of reaction—1931—the Communist Party candidate polled 697 votes in North Hammersmith. In 1934, after the upsurge, his vote declined from 697 to 614!

Communist Party parliamentarism continued its zig-zag course of dictated futility down to the outbreak of the Second World War, in September, 1939. The war developed a policy of transition from peace zig to war zag. By its unscrupulous exploitation of the workers' needs for the moment, its capacity for bogus organisation, its total disregard for all Socialist first principles, this organised caricature of Communism betrayed the workers to disaster. From the time of its forming as an alleged organisation of the working class to its present activity as

an unwanted agent of British Imperialism, the Communist Party has pursued a worse and more impotent opportunism than that of ordinary Labour Parliamentarism. Labourists have been known to be moved to genuine indignation and to utter honest words. They do preserve some individual character. The Communist Parliamentarians have no character and no individuality. They function like a herd, as do the Nazis or Fascists. This fact is typified in the case of Willie Gallacher, the lone "Communist" M.P. for West Fife.

In *The Worker*, the weekly organ of Clydeside Workers' Committees movement, for January, 29th 1942, Gallacher condemned *The Wrigglings of a Politician.*" The politician concerned was Neil MacLean, M.P. The article made excellent reading at the time. To-day it surpasses itself, for it applies to Gallacher now with as much force as it applied to MacLean twenty years ago.

Gallacher opens the article in fighting strain as follows :—

"What an injured innocent is the Hon. Member for Govan! He has given so much service to the movement—and really we ought to leave him alone. But he isn't alone with that wail. Blatchford, Hyndman, Tillet, and a whole host of others are all claiming the same virtue. The only trouble is that they don't say what the service is.

"One thing we know, however, is that men like Blatchford by their activities gained the ear of a large section of the workers, and then led them into the arms of the Imperialist Government. That was betrayal of the workers. Will the Hon. Member for Govan find fault with me if I call them traitors? Has he not called them traitors himself—when it suited him? To say that we should concentrate on the Capitalist enemy in itself justifies any attack we may make on a 'traitor, fakir, and fraud,' for he is essentially an 'ally' of the Capitalists.

"It must ever be the work of the revolutionaries, while fighting the boss class, to expose most mercilessly those who would mislead or betray the workers.

"Having got that over, will McLean, M.P., face the argument put up? There is no use trying to cloud the issue by asking why I didn't interfere at the meeting referred to. He knows why I didn't take part in it. for the simple reason that I told him why myself. A week before his meeting the 'Record' came out with a two-column 'stunt' about a 'scene' at a meeting in Renfrew Street, in which I figured rather prominently, and I had no desire to give them another opportunity of filling their columns at my expense. To have a scene one week with one McLean was bad enough, but to have another scene the following week with another McLean would have been a bit too much."

The "one M'Lean" was, of course, John MacLean.

Gallacher proceeds to accuse Neil MacLean of being a mason, and continues :—

"Then will he face this? At the meeting referred to he said that Lloyd George in his Radical days had called the Dukes 'mongrels.' Now, he argued, Lloyd George has joined the Dukes, and we are justified in calling him a "mongrel.' Does the Hon. Member deny having said that Lloyd George is a 'mongrel'? Very good. But when Lloyd George was a Radical attacking the Dukes, Neil McLean was a revolutionary S.L.P.er. attacking McDonald, Snowden, and the Labour Party leaders generally as 'traitors, fakirs, and frauds.' Surely then, if it is justifiable to call Lloyd George a 'mongrel' because he is among the 'Dukes,' it is equally justifiable to call McLean a 'traitor, fakir, and fraud, now he is among the gang he was so anxious to expose before he was expelled from the S.L.P. If there is anything wrong with this argument, will he kindly put me right? There is no sense in suggesting that I am a mudlark. I don't have to accuse him of being a 'traitor,' etc., his own argument damns him.

"Neither is there any sense in dragging in Lenin's pamphlet on 'Infantile Sickness' and giving the impression that it is written about me. It is a pamphlet of 100 pages, and only one page is devoted to the criticism of a letter of mine which appeared in the Workers' Dreadnought. Apart from that letter Lenin didn't know of my existence, so that it is stretching things a bit to suggest that the sub-title has anything to do with 'Gallacher.'"

Gallacher comes to the main point of his indictment against Neil MacLean :—

"But the trouble with McLean is that before going to Parliament he claimed to be a Bolshevik, was found to be a Bolshevik, and then denied being one when challenged in the House of Commons."

Gallacher next described what took place in the House of Commons, and proves his case up to the hilt.

He cites the following passages from Hansard :—

Mr. CHURCHILL.—The House has listened to a lively speech from the Hon. Member opposite, which is, I think, his first appearance in the responsible position of speaking from the front opposition bench. (Cries of 'No.') At anyrate it is the first I have had the good fortune to hear, and I must say I observe that a growing responsibility is exercising its usual effect upon the hon. gentleman, and as he approaches the centre of power his political creed has become more carefully defined. He told us he was not a Bolshevist, but on the 27th of June at Southport I am credibly informed the hon. gentleman said : "I stand for the Bolshevist regime. The Bolshevist Government, whatever their faults, are fighting the battle of our class in Russia, and I appeal to you to back them up."

Now the hon. gentleman says he is not a Bolshevist, and ranks himself with those Socialists who are, as we have been told, the special objects of Bolshevik resentment.

Mr. McLEAN.—This is the second time this quotation has been used against me. It was used on a previous occasion at a meeting of the Labour Party. What I said at Southport on that occasion, and I think Hon. Members who were present will admit that what I say is correct, was this. I was pointing out what was happening in Russia, and I said that if I had to choose between the Czarist regime and the Bolshevik regime, I would choose the Bolshevik. Those were my words.

Mr. CHURCHILL.—Then the words must have been taken down wrongly by the reporter. We know that these mistakes do happen, and are alleged to happen, when one sees next day something which one would rather not have said. The hon. gentleman is quite wrong if he thinks I quoted this reference to his speech for the purpose of reproaching him. On the contrary, I was complimenting him on the increasing gravity of his political position, etc., etc.

Gallacher concluded :—

"Laugh ! The House shook with laughter and the Hon. Member for Govan could only whine, 'I didn't say I was a Bolshevik ; I only said if I had to choose between the Czar and—Bah : And he has the damned audacity to say he didn't snivel."

Not an elegant conclusion, but an effective one. In 1938, Neil MacLean and Gallacher were speaking on the same platform in pursuit of a common parliamentary careerism. I wonder if either recalled this 1921 denunciation. Withal, Churchill seems to have had the best of the discussion. He observed correctly that a growing responsibility exercised its usual effect upon the hon. gentleman, etc. That is the purpose and function of parliamentarism. To destroy the zeal for Socialism, and to transform the agitator into a politician, a statesman, and toady of wealth and power. Neil MacLean still wriggles and has never ceased from wriggling. This offence is less noticable now than in 1921 because Gallacher has contracted the disease. Even in the House of Commons, Churchill repeats his performances. Whereas in 1921 he made the House laugh at MacLean, to-day Gallacher is the butt of the War Premier's sharp retorts and magnificient impertinences. Equally with MacLean, Gallacher is now in the position of those who would mislead or betray.

Two months after his attack on Neil MacLean Gallacher was imprisoned. Thereupon, the Provisional Executive of the C.P.G.B., at its meeting on Sunday, March 13th, 1921, decided, in the event of a bye-election at Leicester, to run Willie Gallacher as Communist Party candidate. Arthur MacManus explained the situation in *The Communist* for March 19th, beneath full-page headings : "*Our Convict Candidate.*" This was the main heading. It was sensational rather than correct. Gallacher was a convicted, hard-labour prisoner, not a convict. The second heading read : "*Willie Gallacher as Prospective Communist Member for Leicester.*"

In the body of the article, MacManus stated that the Government had issued a challenge and Gallacher's candidature "*is our acceptance of that challenge.*"

MacManus quoted *Hansard*. Commander Kenworthy had declared Malone was prosecuted for his opinions. Shortt, Home Secretary, denied this allegation and declared: "There is not a single hon. member who can produce the shorthand notes of a single trial in any court which can substantiate any such charge."

Mr. Neil McLean: I am accepting the challenge thrown out by the Home Secretary, and I am going to quote the case of a Paisley mechanic, William Gallacher.

Mr. Shortt: For inciting to murder.

Mr. McLean: Of course, we all incite to murder when we make any appeal to an audience to displace the present Government! Gallacher was not inciting to murder. It is idle for the Home Secretary to say he was not prosecuted for his opinions.

MacManus proceeded to describe the "Paisley mechanic":

"Our readers know who Willie Gallacher is. They know him as a National Organiser of the Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement—and they know him as one of themselves, a clean, hard, true fighter."

This was nonsence. All Parliamentary careerists start as Gallacher started. They are returned to Parliament, in the first instance, because the workers know them. Always, to the workers, the careerists begin, "as one of themselves." And they are always "clean, hard fighters." Briand was "a hard, true fighter." John Burns was "one of themselves"; an unemployed engineer; "a hard, true fighter." He was the original "man with the red flag." The Socialists came to quote: "John Burns' verdict on himself: Judas Iscariot!" MacDonald was a starveling teacher; Thomas was an engine-driver; Henderson, a foundry-labourer; and J. R. Clynes, a mill-hand. Even Willie Adamson, whom Gallacher defeated, was returned to Parliament on the first occasion because he was a miner and because the miners thought and said all the things about him that MacManus said about Gallacher.

How do these men feel when they attain place if not power? In *From Cotton Mill to Downing Street*—the title sums up Parliamentarism—J. R. Clynes describes what happened when King George V. sent for MacDonald to form the first "Labour" Capitalist Government.

"As we stood waiting for His Majesty, among the luxurious gold and crimson magnificence, I could not help marvelling at the strange turn of fortune's wheel which had brought MacDonald, Thomas, Henderson, Clynes, etc., to this pinnacle beside the man whose forbears had been kings for so long."

It never occurred to Clynes that "the gold and silver magnificence" contrasted with slum conditions might be wrong.

Clynes added: "The little quiet man whom we addressed as 'Your Majesty,' swiftly put us at our ease."

Gallacher was not to be the same as Clynes. MacManus depicted what would happen if Gallacher were returned to Parliament:

"And if Gallacher wins, what then? Be sure that Capitalism does not keep up Parliament for sentimental reasons. The hard-faced men meet there for other than historical reasons. They meet because it is absolutely necessary, for Capital's preservation, that the pretence of a real fight going on in Parliament should be kept up. Communist M.P.'s will call his bluff. Communist M.P.'s will insist on raising the important issues. They will insist on awkward questions. So they will force every one to recognise that Parliament evades every issue that matters to the workers—that it DARE NOT and CANNOT deal with anything vital. Communist M.P.'s will strip the Parliamentary veil from Capitalism. They will show the naked force that lies underneath."

Has Gallacher done this since 1935 ? What awkward questions has this "Paisley mechanic" asked ?

The year after Gallacher was to stand for Leicester he was supporting the Communist Party Election Manifesto, which concluded that, although there was "treachery on the part of the leaders," the "Labour Party is against Capitalists !" Radek ridiculed this election address at the Fourth Congress of the Moscow International and declared, in his shrewd way, that the C.P. was like the kind-hearted Biblical Ruth "Wither Naomi goes, thither goes Ruth also."

As Radek sat down, Zinoviev rose, waved a telegram and declared that Walter Newbold had won Motherwell for Moscow !

This "victory" enthused Gallacher. He haunted the lobbies of the House of Commons, dined on the terrace with Newbold, dreamed of a mass C.P. being organised "under the guidance of the Comintern": and wrote Parliamentary notes for *The Worker*. He retained this Parliamentary mood until the nine months' subsidy postponed the mining crisis in the autumn of 1925. He transferred his attention to the industrial field, and wrote in the terms of struggle and "direct action," meaning industrial reformism.

In *The Worker* for August 15th, 1925, Gallacher urged working-class preparation for the coming crisis. He wanted every available man brought into the unions, and every union brought under the direction of the General Council. The 1926 debacle proved Gallacher's advice to be unsound. Actually, the General Council was parliamentarian and never believed in direct action.

During this semi-direct action period, Gallacher placed great faith in Wheatley, Maxton and Kirkwood and wanted them to break from the "politically palsied leaders" of the I.L.P. He asked "Comrade Wheatley," especially, to break his "political associations with the middle-class leaders of the I.L.P.," who were "not interested in the workers' struggle" and "only see in the workers what the Liberals see in them—a mass of voters, who are useful for the futherance of their own pet schemes for saving the middle-class from the hungry clutch of the financiers."

Gallacher further denounced the Parliamentarians in *The Worker*, for May, 29th 1926, in bold type as "The Gas-Bags, Unlimited," and explained :

> **"The Parliamentarians are and have been utterly lost these times. Nobody has been paying any attention to them at all, and they feel some of them very annoyed that a rude, rough industrial dispute should have overshadowed their gassy utterances."**

The General Strike ended in disaster, and Gallacher stampeded back to Parliamentary reformism. Before the end of 1926, he was defending a programme of "constitutional demands"; pooling of motor cars at election times; increased facilities for voting in rural areas; full political rights for soldiers, sailors and airmen; universal adult francise; proportional representation; a single franchise for all purposes; abolition of the House of Lords; abolition of the monarchy; and a Democratic Republic ! What a strange mixed programme of political idealism and undiluted capitalist catch-penny opportunism ! What muddled Socialism ! What "infantile-sickness of the Left !"

Now came the Smethwick election, and the return of Oswald Mosley as M.P., on Tuesday, December 21st, 1926. Mosley was described in the Press as "the rich young Socialist aristocrat," and "the noisy quick-firing machine gun" of the Labour Party.

On the Saturday before the election, MacManus and Gallacher came down from London to hold a special meeting in the constituency in support of Mosley. Despite Mosley's repudiation of them, Gallacher welcomed "Comrade Mosley" into the ranks of the Communists, and described the rich aristocrat as a "sincere proletarian." He added that Mosley was "a very good type, strong and honest."

Declaring that there was "too much snobbery in the Labour Party," Gallacher stated that "it was because of that snobbery that I advised Comrade Mosley to act for a year as a labourer on the Clydeside."

Gallacher concluded that, unlike "Comrade Mosley," the leaders of the Labour Party were sitting down "playing ludo with the Capitalists."

In November, 1935, William Gallacher stood for West Fife and captured the seat from Willie Adamson, the miner's leader, who died not long afterwards. The figures were: Gallacher, 13,462; Adamson, 12,869; Milne (Conservative), 9,667.

Gallacher's programme, as published in the *Daily Worker*, November 14th, 1935, was pure reformism. Summarised it was: Defeat the National Government and return a Labour Government. Against Rearmament. Collective peace. Work and wages for all. End tax on Co-operatives. Gallacher to lead the United Front.

The *Daily Worker* for November 16th, 1935, gave huge headings to Gallacher's victory, and declared, in heavy type:

> **"This splendid victory was received with scenes of tremendous enthusiasm in Fife, which, a couple of hours later, was spreading among workers throughout the country and especially in Rhondda, where the valleys last night were ringing with cheers for this magnificent event."**

What magnificent event? Perhaps the people of Rhonda Valley and those of Fife will tell us what they have gained up-to-date from the return of Gallacher. We know what Gallacher has gained. He has gained what every other Labour fakir gains when he is returned to Parliament. But what have the miners of Wales and Scotland gained?

In the same issue of the *Daily Worker*, W. Wainwright, the *Daily Worker* special correspondent, wrote from Dunfermline, under Friday's date:

> **"Gallacher has won! There is tremendous excitement here at Dunfermline. . . . Celebration socials are being held all over the constituency for this evening. School children have been going about saying that Gallacher is going to abolish the strap in the schools."**

From whom did the children obtain this strap story? Has the strap been abolished in the Fife schools?

Gallacher describes his return as a "Blow at Reaction," a sentiment which the *Daily Worker* displayed in big type. He stated, in the proper Parliamentary style:

> **"I regard my splendid vote and victory in West Fife as a condemnation of the policy of the National Government and a striking blow to the forces of reaction which are preparing for war and new attacks upon the workers."**

More general balderdash. Then Gallacher concluded his statement on the specific note :

"The big factor responsible for my election is the hatred of the Fife miners for the policy of the National Government, and their determination to go forward for united National action for an increase of 2/- per day."

Gallacher, after his return to Parliament, voted himself an increase in salary of from £400 to £600 per year. He could not have voted himself this £200 per year increase, and would not have received even £400 per year, but for the miners' 2/- per day, which played such a part in securing his return ?

Gallacher described his return as a striking blow against war. Was it ?

When "Defence" was debated in the House of Commons in July 1936, the I.L.P. moved an amendment against supplementary estimates for the armed forces, Campbell Stephen and George Buchanan acted as tellers. *Sixty-four Labour men trooped into the Lobby along with them.* W. Gallacher, the Communist Member for West Fife, refused to join the rebels ! The *Daily Worker* defended his conduct by saying that "with the mass of the Labour members, he *just ignored the childish—and ignorant—antics of the I.L.P.*" This is the style John Burns employed when he joined the Liberal Cabinet in opposition to the Labour and Social Democratic Parties. Referring to "the strong, sane statesman, Mr William Gallacher, M.P.," Campbell Stephen declared rightly, that "the policy of the C.P. has put Gallacher in the position of being afraid to vote differently from Attlee the Parliamentary leader."

This sneer was merited.

Gallacher's subsequent activities have been matter of comment in *The Word* and need not be followed here. Every Socialist will recall how he was for a "People's Peace" and for the sabotage of war when Stalin made his famous pact with Hitler; and how, when Hitler broke the pact, he became the jingo of jingoes, in defence of the Soviet Union ! The man's contradictions and worthlessness defy full recording. But they define Communist Parliamentarism, the most absurd will-o'-the-wisp that ever misled the workers.

XVII. Parliament's Place and the Rise of Labour.

Parliamentarism cannot solve, and does not seek to solve, the only problem that matters, the key problem of all social misery, the problem of class society, its transformation into true, equal, or free society. Its aim is to perpetuate Imperialist or exploiting society. It is a legacy of Roman Imperialism, a remnant of the Roman code. It registers no progress. One quotation will prove this fact beyond all contradiction.

Tiberius Gracchus flourished B.C. 133-103. He was a social reformer, seeking to reform the lot of the people, never wishing to overthrow the Empire. He gave his life for his poor measures of reformism. He described the lot of the Roman soldiers in these words:—

"Without houses, without any settled habitations, the disbanded militia wander from place to place with their wives and children: and the generals do but mock them when, as the head of their armies, they exhort their men to fight for the sepulchres and die for domestic household divinities. . . . The private soldiers fight and die to advance the wealth and luxury of the great: and they are called masters of the world, while they have not a foot of ground in their possession."

Is it such a far cry from B.C. 133 to A.D. 1934? Can we say that these words have lost any of their force, that they no longer apply? Is it not time we proved them false for all future generations? Will Parliamentarism aid us in this struggle?

The House of Commons, as the folks-chamber, is composed of a Speaker, clerks, doorkeepers, waiters, reporters, and a few silent members. That is to say, these persons are the necessary requisites, in or about the Commons, to set off the glory of the conspicuous characteristic of the Chamber—the vapid and unprofitable chatter of the expectant placeman. This gentleman is an inevitable result of, and necessary adjunct to, the political machine which reflexes the principles and policy of a system which produces for private gain. He is quite conspicuous on the Labour benches; a rigorous attender of the House, always ready to interpose in a debate, persistent in his efforts to make a mark and prove his fitness for office; his heart bleeding for Labour; his discretion pandering to the Stock Exchange gilt-edged fraternity; and his imagination conjuring up the great ghosts of the traditional mighty dead of the Mother of the Parliaments who were lying, deceiving swashbucklers in real life, as the records of the Chartists and the biography of Lord Shaftesbury will show.

Is it not obvious that the entire career of a man of this type, and his name is legion, is founded on an ambition that denotes him to be a hireling of "law and order," a traitor to the working class, who never can and never will seek to emancipate his class? Such is parliamentarism!

Whoso wishes to remain a slave and considers his role a honourable one, whoso wishes to perpetuate slums and inequalities, banquets and famine, hovels and palaces, a disordered whole ironically termed civilised society, will support it.

Whoso believes that the workers can pursue a better and braver path to a real goal and a truer end, will reject it.

They will desert parliamentarism for what must be when one does not parley; the social struggle, and all that that struggle means. They will stand for Socialism, the social upheaval, as distinct from Capitalism, the parliamentary revision.

Thus, will they solve the problem of class struggle and so inaugurate the Social Revolution, the Workers' Industrial Republic. Thus will they answer the burning question of to-day: SOCIALISM or PARLIAMENT?

Workers of the World, Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains! You have a world to gain!

NOTES and APPENDICES

Pamphlets and papers referred to in these appendices may be consulted by London comrades at the British Museum. In many instances, pamphlets and papers have been sold in volume form, and might either be purchased second-hand or borrowed for reference.

I. Author's Conversion to Anti-Parliamentarism

Anti-Parliamentarism is not an offshoot of the Russian Revolution or a development of theories advocated by the Third International. The author became an Anti-Parliamentarian Socialist or Communist eleven years before the Russian Revolution occurred.

The author's letter, published in *Justice*, the S.D.F. organ, for May 26, 1906, repudiating the part played by Labour men in Parliament, is reproduced in Chapter XII., 2nd Part, *Dogmas Discarded*, Word Library, No. 9. See also Chapter XI., same part.

II. S.P.G.B. Correspondence, 1906

Constant references are made by the S.P.G.B. propagandists to my alleged application for membership of that organisation. In Chapter XIV. of the 2nd Part, *Dogmas Discarded*, is reproduced from the columns of *The Socialist Standard* for November 3rd, 1906 (Vol. 3, No. 27) pp. 22 to 23, the actual correspondence as published by that journal.

III. The Movement (1907)

I reproduce in this appendix excerpts from my notes recording the progress of the anti-Parliamentary movement, published in the *Voice of Labour*, on the dates mentioned. Repetitions are avoided as far as possible. The excerpts serve this purpose: they prove I lived in a world of illusion as regards the early approach of the Social Revolution.

1.—MAY 25th.

When the economic conditions are ripe for the success of any movement, the trickery of individuals who would betray the workers' cause for their own advancement avails little against the force of such a propaganda. This is essentially one of the principles of Industrial Unionism; and as the manifesto of the "Industrial Union of Direct Actionists" will show, the trickery of Social Democrats notwithstanding, direct action will be the basis of the new Unionism that is being conceived in the light of bitter experience. Wherever the propaganda is being carried on, success is waiting on our efforts. In Islington and Clerkenwell the local paper has been forced to devote several columns to the elucidation of the principles of direct action and of Anarchism, whilst reporting my meetings at length. In Plaistow the comrades are fighting the good fight, whilst the German anti-militarist movement is taking root in the "foreign" quarter (as though racial difference varied the principle of exploitation!)

Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester are calling for speakers, and I am hoping to visit these centres of activity.

The tone of Freethought gatherings also, which I have had occasion to address in South London latterly, are becoming more decidedly anti-authoritarian, whilst Tolstoi's admirers are growing daily—i.e. those who admire his revolutionary fervour more than his anti-artistic and anti-scientific declarations. The Social Revolution is coming. Of this there can be no doubt. And it is nearing rapidly. The economic force behind it is tremendous, and against it the declamations of Parliamentarians are as the breath of flies before the storm.

SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENT.

The I.U.D.A. is going to succeed, and its initials are already familiar. Twopence a week, not contributed to the sending of a fellow worker to the home of snobocratic oratory and legislative humbug, but to the advancement of the cause of Labour's solidarity, will be but a small sum well spent, and it will not be given to a large friendly society existing either to be pillaged by the capitalist class or exploited by officialism.

* * *

Of course, it must not be forgotten that the need of propaganda has rendered the forming of a propaganda group of paramount importance. A few comrades, including myself, have now formed such a group, and its first meeting will shortly be announced. The group will supply speakers for meetings of the comrades and defray expenses, comrades to contribute to the funds of the group for this purpose. The secretary would also be glad to hear from comrades who have had some experience of speaking, and are willing to help to further the principles. It is essential that lady speakers should take to the field, as one woman comrade is worth many male comrades when she is a speaker. Under the auspices of the Propaganda Group, correspondence and oral classes in economics, elocution, and industrial history are also being arranged. Of these more anon. Further inquiries should be addressed to 133 Goswell Road, E.C., where I am also happy to receive requests from comrades for speakers, as also to arrange for lectures. Let us be up and doing, and the emancipation of man will be at hand.

* * *

Amongst other things, it is obvious that the "Voice of Labour" has a mission to perform, and has therefore come to stay. I write "stay" and I mean "stay"—to stay until our mission is accomplished, and has become a part of history. The comrades must rally to its support, and see to it that it shall be eloquent of the ideals for which we strive. And so, organised, inspired, and strenuous, shall we sweep aside the despots of Parliament and Governmentalism, become one in spirit with Bakunin and the heroes of other climes and times, and onward to the freedom of the world. We have but to look to our training, be true to ourselves, hold strenuously by our principles, but be animated by no prejudice, and the world is ours—the inheritance of those who have toiled.

* * *

For my part I have put my shoulder to the wheel and now find return impossible. My life is in the movement, and of the movement I must be. This is a healthy phenomenon. Not only so, but since other comrades are similarly placed I must write in the plural, and say these are healthy phenomena. It is for the phenomena to become a totality, and the movement to become something more than a sentimental wave. The need for it lies deep down in social conditions and human degradation. And so we must "be up and doing with a heart for any fate, still achieving and pursuing, learning to labour and to wait." But we must wait with a discontented mien, recognising that propaganda involves money, until Labour is ripe for the General Strike. But if money be needed, the healthy union of comrades is a much more urgent necessity. And it is in the hope of accomplishing such a union that the I.U.D.A. and the Propaganda Club have been conceived. Opposed to the intrigues of politics, their future is a bright one. For working class solidarity conquers all things, and ere long it shall plant the red flag of revolt over all the citadels of the world. Yes; solidarity in revolt and freedom in unity are the principles which are going to spell the doom of capitalism, and secure to man a free generation.

* * *

2.—JUNE 8th.

COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.

The above group has been formed for the purpose of carrying on a more effective propaganda amongst the workers generally, whose knowledge of the General Strike, Anti-Militarism, and the power of Direct Action is mostly limited to such reports as the capitalist press care to print.

To this end the general secretary would be pleased to hear from all comrades who would help either in speaking or in selling literature. For those who are willing to help in lecturing Comrade Aldred is forming classes, both elementary and advanced, in economics and industrial and social history. An entrance fee of 1s. will be charged.

Educational papers, with questions accompanying, will be issued monthly, and a stamped and addressed envelope must accompany each list of questions for the return of their answers with comments, together with further instruction.

Beginning with the colder autumn months, oral classes in elocution, economics, and industrial history will be convened free, but any comrades desiring to anticipate this training are invited to communicate with the secretary. It is to be hoped that lady comrades will make a feature of attending these classes with a view to becoming speakers. The main object of the Group being to inspire comrades with confidence and to equip them with knowledge, it is hoped they will make every use of these classes.

For further information write (enclosing stamped and addressed envelope for reply) to Guy A. Aldred, general secretary, C.P.G., 133 Goswell Road, London, E.C.

3.—JULY 6th.

"Open economic rebellion; the education of ourselves and our children up to the realities of State and capitalist oppression! and the fearless resort to whatever line of action such revolt may involve." Such is the message I propose to take to the inhabitants of those provincial cities I hope to visit shortly. It is the message which I am taking with me wherever I go to lecture on the economic and political conditions of the day. . . .

I might add that at the present time the Liverpool Group has twenty members, and that there are many waiting to join. Its vigorous demonstration of its existence might well be emulated by other groups. Group secretaries please note!

Reynold's, in its issue for June 23, briefly outlined our principles and objects, as also did the German paper, Die Direkte Aktion, in its issue for June 22; whilst Der Freie Arbeiter for June 29 translates the main part of the Manifesto published in the Voice of Labour for June 1, and expresses the hope that the new tone of the organisation in its appeal to the proletariat will be vigorously responded to.

On Sunday last I addressed three meetings under the auspices of the Camberwell branch of the National Secular Society. The meetings were well attended, and the tone of the gatherings certainly spoke well for the good work the Freethinkers are doing. There can be no doubt that the Freethought movement has given the world better fighters for liberty than has any State, Democratic or Christian Socialist movement; and as a stepping-stone to the economic revolt and principles of real freedom, Freethought is invaluable. I therefore hold, as a believer in Bakuninian thoroughness, that it is a duty to insist on the atheistic and Anarchistic basis of progress. With the piety of the sentimentalist, and the sentiment of the pietist we can have no compromise.

* * *

The iconoclastic attitude which the I.U.D.A. has adopted towards the policy of Trade Unions has occasioned some surprise amongst those of my readers who venerate Trade Unionism after the manner of the Roman Catholic and his reverence for saintly relics. My only comment is to challenge any defender of the Trade Union faith to show in what way Labour has benefited by Trade Unionism. Should any fideo defensor be forthcoming, I am quite willing to meet him in either literary or platform debate—the last-mentioned for preference. Also, with regard to the Industrial Unionism of the Socialist Labour Party, with its compromise between direct action and political intrigue, I wonder if any member of this party is prepared to defend its hybrid Industrial Unionism against the well-defined and real Industrial Unionism of the I.U.D.A. Why will not the Socialist Labour Party carry its principles to their logical conclusion?

* * *

4.—JULY 13th.

As announced in these notes two weeks since, the first meeting of the Communist Propaganda Group was held at my residence last Friday. Whilst the attendance was good, it was expected by some comrades that it would have been larger than what it was. The meeting proved itself fairly business-like, and it was decided to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, July 16. In all there were fifteen comrades present, and it was decided to at once inaugurate elocution and industrial history classes, meetings for this purpose being convened on Tuesdays and Fridays. It was further proposed to establish a lending library, Ramage being appointed to draw up a catalogue of the books that were available for comrades' use. Comrades intending to become group members will first have to be introduced by other comrades who are already members, in accordance with the unanimous decision of the meeting. As regards the question of finance, which was not discussed at the meeting, some members subsequently suggested a minimum subscription of twopence a week, whilst others (including myself) leaned towards the idea of voluntary contributions, leaving the question of the amount to members' own discretion. This matter will have to be discussed at our next gathering. Of course, as I pointed out to members on Friday evening, the Propaganda Group is an educational movement, and is not related to the I.U.D.A. as such. Membership of the one group does not, therefore, involve membership of the other, nor agreement with its policy. I trust that this statement will prevent our comrades from confounding the two groups.

* * *

"A Trade Unionist M.P.," writing in the Bolton and Barrow News, warns his readers against confounding our Union with any ordinary Trade Union, and adds that it is an imitation of the French General Confederation of Labour. What rubbish! It is quite true that our Union is founded on the principle of regional organisation, and that its ideals are similar to those of direct action Unions abroad; but that is only because the acceptance of like principles, coupled with a tendency to organise, must produce like organisations; the growth of such bodies as are founded on a similar basis being parallel, and not imitative. It would be much more correct to attribute "A Trade Unionist M.P.'s" petulant contribution to the criticism of the I.U.D.A. to an imitative endeavour begotten of ignorance. The column containing the article seemed to be a stereo, and was probably supplied by a London Press Agency at half-a-crown a column. Such, O shades of Richard Carlile! are the ways of our glorious Free Press! A Prostituted Press would be alike more alliterative and more true.

SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENT.

On Monday, July 1, a debate took place at Garnault Place between Mayhew, of the Social Democratic Federation, and myself, on Direct Action v. Legislation. The meeting was well attended, and very successful from many points of view. The same is true of the meeting I held in Hyde Park on Saturday evening last; as also of the three lectures I delivered on Sunday under the auspices of the Camberwell Branch of the National Secular Society. Of these, I may be excused if I briefly outline the substance of my afternoon address on Christian Criminals and Atheist Moralists. Defining a moralist as one who, either by his example or by the influence of his teaching, made for the elevation of the individual and the identification of personal happiness with communal well-being, I proceeded to enumerate the main teachings and characteristics of Spinoza, the psycho-Atheist, Huxley, Darwin, Tyndall, Bastian, Bakunin, Reclus, Bradlaugh, Annie Besant, Kropotkin, Louise Michel, and several other Atheist moralists. On the other hand, I defined a criminal as one who by his compromise with hypocrisy or by his professional philanthrophy caused men to negate the principles of true being, and for some temporary relief of the flesh sell their independence of spirit. This led, for divergent reasons, to the inclusion as "Christian Criminals" of Charles Peace, General Booth, the late Dr. Barnardo, Prebendary Wilson Carlile, Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of London, John D. Rockfeller, Dr. Aked, and a few more "soul savers" and their capitalist confreres. My exposure of the tactics of these philanthropic rogues was well received, and the audience applauded my recalling the "oil king's" donation of £20,000 to the Baptists' Foreign Missions, and his securement of Dr. Aked as his pastor, in connection with the appended variation of the Doxology:—

Praise John from whom oil blessings flow;
Praise him, ye Baptists here below,
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise John and God, but John the most.

Bigotry is a characteristic of Social Democracy. For some time past those branches of the Social Democratic Federation which had booked me for lecture engagements, knowing my attitude towards Parliamentarism and Trade Unionism, have been busy cancelling my engagements. The latest to do so is the Northampton Branch, for which I was to have spoken on July 14th. I am becoming so used to this modern Inquisition as to find it only amusing. And it would seem, the way in which the S.D.F. are treating those members of their body who have sympathy with the Industrial Workers of the World, that I am not the only victim of their boycott. I am now wondering whether the Walthamstow Branch will have the courage to carry through the debate which I am to have with one of their shining lights on August 1 next. If they have not got the name of an opponent, I will supply them with a list of S.D.F. speakers who have recently challenged me to debate. And I am prepared to discuss any phase of the social problem, or of the respective policies of the I.U.D.A. and the S.D.F. Now then, Walthamstow, risk the anger of the executive, and play the game like men!

* * *

5.—AUGUST 10th.

Writing in Justice last year at the time of my withdrawal from the Social Democratic Federation, E. Belfort Bax defended me against the charge of bigotry then editorially placed to my account, on the ground that "every man or organisation prepared to stick to principle risks the accusation of intolerance and bigotry, just as every man who is prudent risks the accusation of cowardice, and every man who is brave of rashness." Similarly, every man who writes or speaks with vigour, who is thorough in his exposition of his principles and strong in his antagonism to looseness of expression, risks the charge of abuse. But by abuse I understand an attack on the personality of an opponent as opposed to an onslaught on his views, an enlarging on physical defects instead of concerning oneself with data—personal or impersonal—relevant to a true exposition of any thesis under discussion. So far as I am concerned, I do not think I am as prone to indulgence in abuse as defined above as my opponents, nor do I know of one instance which would warrant my putting in a plea of guilty. Whilst I neither ask from nor give quarter to an opponent, I always seek to distinguish between vigorous and impersonal discussion and cheap personal vituperation. If my opponents can show me one case where I have forgotten myself, let them but instance the circumstances and I will publicly apologise.

If not quite relevant to these notes, it is at least important as bearing on the subject of Direct Action that I should direct the attention of the English movement to Comrade Arnold Roller's German pamphlet on Direct Action. The pamplet has already been translated in Dutch, and partly in Bohemian; whilst in a few weeks an edition in French will be published in Brussels, and one in Yiddish in London. It is really a companion pamphlet to its author's Social General Strike essay, which has already appeared in about ten languages. The importance of the pamphlet, and the necessity for an English edition, will be easily recognised from the appended list of its contents:—(1) Indirect Action and legal Trade Unionism; results of actual Trade Union strikes, and the reasons for their failure. (2) Direct Action against the capitalists; the meaning of Direct Action; its most simple and most peaceful form; the revolutionary strike and revolutionary terrorism. (3) Direct Action against the State, the Legislature, and the military. (4) Direct Action as a direct and integral emancipation of the proletariat, expressed in the form of the Social General Strike; and (5) Rights of Groups.

6.—MEETINGS.

The following lecture announcements from the *Voice of Labour* weekly list indicates my activity at this time. In every case the meetings were carried out. I have only two issues by me as I write. All lectures are on Sunday, except where otherwise stated.

JULY 6th.

Camberwell.—**Station Road, 11.30, Guy A. Aldred, "What Constitutes Freedom and Freethought ?"**

Brockwell Park.—**3.15 p.m., Guy A. Aldred, "Christian Criminals and Atheist Moralists."**

Brockwell Park.—**6.15 p.m., Guy A. Aldred, "Robert Taylor, C.E.S., Infidel."**

Clerkenwell.—**Garnault Place, Rosebery Avenue, every Monday, 8.30. p.m., I.U.D.A. meeting ; chairman, V. Ramage ; lecturer, Guy A. Aldred, "Industrial Unionism and Trade Unionists."**

Marble Arch.—**I.U.D.A. meetings convened by Guy A. Aldred and V. Ramage every Saturday evening at 7.30.**

AUGUST 10th.

Marble Arch.—**Saturday, I.U.D.A. meeting, 7.30, Guy A. Aldred, A. Ray, A. Young, and J. Sugar.**

Victoria Park.—**3.15, Guy A. Aldred, "Christian Criminals and Atheist Moralists" ; 6.15, "Why I am an Atheist."**

Hoxton Church.—**11.30, Guy A. Aldred and V. Ramage, I.U.D.A. meeting, "The Failure of Trade Unionism."**

Tower Hill.—**Unemployed meetings every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1 to 3, Williams, Greenwood, Aldred and others.**

IV. Anti-Parliamentarian Theory and Organisation Prior to the A.P.C.F. and Scottish Groups

The COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA GROUP was organised by the present writer acting in conjunction with the *Voice of Labour* group at first, and subsequently with other London groups in 1907. It was very active in Clerkenwell, Islington, Brixton, Hammersmith, and West London generally, till 1909. But it lacked speakers.

Renewed its activity in June, 1910. Propaganda taken over by various London Communist Groups in 1911.

This group had a platform of 21 points. These were published as an appendix to *Militarism and Revolution* (1st edition, June, 1909: 2nd edition, 1912, *Revolt Library*, No. 4). The first thirteen articles and also number 15 were merely a theoretic statement of Socialism. But the other seven are important as defining the Anti-Parliamentary position. They are as follows:—

"14.—The work of the working class being the overthrow of capitalism and the negation of its method of administration, as a struggle between the social organisation of the future and the social organisation of the past, the struggle between the working class and the master class is a political one.

"16.—This political struggle does not admit of the proletariat sending men of their own class to Parliament on capitalistic franchises, with property-vote mandates, to perpetuate capitalism.

"17.—This political struggle does involve the negation of Parliamentary action, the boycott of the ballot-box, and the organisation of the workers in one INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY within, but antagonistic to the Capitalistic States.

"18.—The class-conscious units which will go to form the nucleus of that party—until the spread of class-consciousness denotes the ripeness of the time for a spontaneous revolution—will deem it an impossibility for the working class to secure any amelioration of its lot, condemn all craft or local industrial successes as tending to militate against Labour's solidarity, and consider all activity of the working class in the light of propaganda only.

"19.—The logical culmination of the class struggle is to be found in the international repudiation of bourgeois legality by the working class, Anti-Constitutional Activity, and the final taking over by the International Stay-in-Strike of the means and instruments of production and distribution.

"20.—In token of the political nature of the struggle, the Communist Party will negate in the Social Commonwealth it erects on the ruins of Capitalism on the morrow of the Revolution :—

"(a) The legislative function which is necessary to secure the government of man, and meaningless outside of class society.

"(b) The judicial function, representing the active of which the legislative is the passive, in the matter of man's domination by man, or rather by private property.

"21.—In place of such complex and unhealthy functions it will extend and simplify the administrative function of society, so as to secure the more efficient distribution and production of commodities, and put on record the fact that whereas Capitalism, concerned with production for profit only, made for the governnace of persons, Communism, being concerned with production for use, demands only the administration of things."

Article 17 is printed exactly as it was at the first time of publishing. This proves that the idea of a Communist International was *not* the special product of the Russian Revolution, but a natural consequence of unsubsidised Socialist thought. Anti-Parliamentarians *deny*, for various reasons, that the Third International is a Communist International.

When the Glasgow Communist Group was formed, in 1912, it adopted this programme of the COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA GROUP.

NORTH LONDON COMMUNIST GROUP. Founded February, 1911 Broken up in 1916, owing to the operation of the Conscription Acts. Held regular propaganda meetings every week in Upper Holloway, Highbury Corner, Kentish Town, Hampstead Heath, Islington, etc. See announcements and reports in *Herald of Revolt* (1911-14). Published a statement of principles, embracing eleven articles, in the *Herald of Revolt* for May, 1911. These mostly define the Socialist attitude towards capitalist society. But the following are of special interest:—

"5.—Capitalism is fundamentally vicious and cannot be reformed.

"6.—The lot of the workers cannot be ameliorated.

"7.—This class of things can only be abolished by the workers, as a class, taking and holding the means of wealth production and distribution, thereby establishing communal control in the interests of each and all.

"8.—Everything is in a state of propaganda until this communal overthrow of the existing social organisation takes place.

"9.—All those interested in working-class propaganda should drop their petty differences and unite together for the vital purpose of creating a revolutionary class-consciousness, by preaching or aiding to preach, those ideas without the proletarian embracement of which capitalism cannot be overthrown."

Special attention is directed to the critical but non-appreciated truth defined in Article 8.

SOUTH LONDON COMMUNIST GROUP. Founded April, 1911. Very active in Blackfriars, Southwark, Walworth, Brixton, New Cross, Woolwich, and Greenwich districts. Held regular weekly meetings and did tremendous propaganda in Woolwich. Remaining history same as North London Group.

MARYLEBONE COMMUNIST GROUP. Founded June, 1911. Very active in Regent's Park and Kentish Town. Activity consistent until the second year of the war.

HAMMERSMITH SOCIALIST SOCIETY. The Hammersmith Branch of the Social Democratic Party seceded from that body and reorganised itself under that title in April, 1911. Adopted a definite Anti-Parliamentary programme and organised regular indoor and outdoor meetings. Name selected to emphasise the fact that William Morris, in pamphlet after pamphlet, had defined and maintained the Anti-Parliamentarian position and had organised a Hammersmith Socialist Society years before. Became merged in the WEST LONDON SOCIALIST COUNCIL and conducted Socialist anti-war propaganda in Hammersmith, Putney, Acton, Ealing, Fulham, Chiswick, Hanwell, until the Conscription Acts of 1916 collapsed sectional organisation and imprisoned the speakers.

V. The Shettleston Election

The question is often raised at Anti-Parliamentary meetings: *Why did Aldred stand for Parliament at Shettleston in* 1922?"

This question shows complete ignorance of the tone of the Shettleston Election and the spirit of the campaign. Accordingly, we reprint the address:—

"TO THE WORKING-CLASS ELECTORS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DIVISION OF SHETTLESTON.

"Bakunin House, Glasgow,
" October, 1922.

"COMRADES AND CITIZENS,

"I am addressing myself solely to the working-class electors because they alone are citizens. No one but a creator or producer of wealth is entitled to rank as a citizen in any true commonwealth. And it is the task of the working-class to create a commonwealth, to so alter and change the present system of production and distribution, that every citizen, irrespective of sex, race, creed, or age, is guaranteed such share of the social wealth and health as shall secure his or her freedom from want and misery, and ensure his or her equal opportunity to share with other citizens in the general prosperity, leisure, and culture. In other words, I address myself to you as a Socialist or Communist and stand definitely for the direct establishment by social revolution of a Workers' Industrial Republic.

"As a Socialist I am opposed to the capitalist State and the Parliamentary system of Government. I am opposed to all State reforms and attempts to solve the unemployed and general distress problems by legislation, because the State does not exist to solve these problems. The State cannot solve unemployment. It cannot abolish pauperism. To abolish poverty it must abolish itself. For the State is paid for out of surplus value. It is maintained out of the wealth stolen from the worker on the field of production, stolen from him in the workshop, stolen from him when he receives his pay envelope. Whether controlled outwardly by Tory, Liberal, or Labour Party, the State exists merely to perpetuate policemanism and slavery, to keep the workers in submission, and the condition of the people problem unsolved.

"I reject the State and stand politically for the complete negation of the present social system. I say the workers must discover and evolve into a new political or social structure their power on the industrial field. Outside the Parliamentary assemblies, and in the council chambers of their industrial associations, the workers must build up and assert their strength to the erection of a new society with the worker and not the monarchy as the central figure of allegiance over and above all differences of political tactics and methods.

"The worker and the worker alone is the monarch of the world. Labour and Labour alone is entitled to our allegiance. And to Labour I pledge my allegiance. I solemnly and sincerely affirm my loyalty to the Workers' Industrial Republic and to the workers in their struggle towards that Republic. I solemnly and sincerely pledge myself never to affirm in any shape or form loyalty to any constitution that is opposed to the workers' interests or denies the need to establish the Workers' Industrial Republic. If returned, therefore, at the head of the poll, as the delegate of the poll, as the delegate of your will and opinion, I shall refuse to take the oath of allegiance.

"The ordinary Labour member **takes, and my Labour opponent, if returned, will take, though claiming to be a Socialist, the following insincere and formal oath or declaration of allegiance :—**

(Here follows the Oath of Allegiance)

"No Socialist can repeat this form of words without perjuring his conscience and abusing the gift of speech. **No man taking part in public work should solemnly proclaim with his lips loyalty to any person or institution that he desires to abolish or overthrow. The duty of a Socialist is to protect against the conspiracy of capitalist society the person and dignity of the worker. He has nothing to do with the person or dignity of a monarch Hence I pledge myself never, under any circumstances, to repeat this oath or affirmation of allegiance. I ask you, by your vote, to record the opinion that no representative ought or should repeat such words, which merely mock and deride all sincerity of speech, and solemnly denies the rights of the worker to establish a new and better society. Monarchy means pageants and palaces. Pageants and palaces mean ignorance, destitution and slums.**

"Since I refuse to take the oath of allegiance, **I shall not be permitted to take my seat in Parliament. This is of no consequence. The place to represent the worker is where the worker suffers and assembles. It is the street-corner, the home, the factory, and the dock. Street-corner oratory educates the worker more effectively than speeches in Parliament that only delude the workers with hopeless hope and futile trust where he should be aroused with faith and action. Parliamentary speeches, and faith in Parliamentary speeches, help capitalism, not Socialism. They assist the Stock Exchange, not the gutter.**

"**All electioneering exposes the weakness of Parliamentary action. It stifles the revolutionary idea and denies principle, without which there can be no efficiency. The principles abandoned in order to woo with catch-phrases and baby-kissing the votes of the electorate are never recovered in the enervating atmosphere of the House of Commons. For this reason** I repudiate Parliament and pledge myself not to sit in the capitalist assembly at Westminster. I undertake, if returned, to represent the workers outside of Parliament, in the streets, and in the struggles without Parliament, that are greater than Parliament. **I stand for the complete and final overthrow of the present social system and the immediate establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth.**

"The programme here outlined is the programme for which, with my colleagues of the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Movement, I was sent to prison in June, 1921. **It is the programme for which I proposed to stand for Parliament in 1906 in Clerkenwell when I grew disgusted with the pretensions of the Labour Party. It is the programme which inspired my resistance to military service, explains my four court-martials, and two trials and convictions for sedition, in London and Glasgow respectively. It is the programme for which the entire Labour movement should stand.**

"The ballot-box merely gives you the opportunity to express an opinion. **It gives you no power whatever. It guarantees no desire of yours being carried into effect. As workers you have and can have no direct control over Parliament. Therefore you should boycott the ballot-box in every case where candidates stand who are prepared to take their seats and oaths of allegiance. You should vote for me in the present case because I am pledged to spike the Parliamentary gun by not taking the oath of allegiance and by remaining outside with you for the Social Revolution and all power to the working class. When you vote see that your opinion is inspired by resolution, and that you are determined to will the power that will make your opinion good and the wealth you create yours.**

"Relying on your intelligence only, **and the explanation I shall give of my policy at meetings, I shall discourage all canvassing for votes. I rely on my speeches and on this address. Use what vehicles you like—the Liberal motor car or the proletarian Shanks' pony—but vote for Anti-Parliamentarism and the revolutionary ticket.**

"**The capitalist State must be abolished. Parliamentarism must be swept aside. Producers' politics—the administration of wealth by those who produce the wealth for the benefit of the wealth producers—must be our aim. Your vote is the declaration of war that will rally the Labour movement of the country to the red banner and inspire the campaign that will achieve this end. Abandon fooling and get to the struggle. Leave the Labour Party to the middle class and prepare for Socialism.**

"**Yours for the Social Revolution,**

"**GUY A. ALDRED.**"

It is my duty to add that the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation favoured the one tactic of boycotting the ballot-box. That was the organised policy from 1912 to 1921. And it remained the policy of the organisation until its general disintegration in 1933-1936.

VI. Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation

Headquarters :

Bakunin House, 13 Burnbank Gardens, Glasgow, W.

Central Glasgow Group, founded 1912. Adopted the programme of the London Communist Propaganda. Helped to found Communist groups in Lanarkshire and Fife, and spread out to Dundee and Aberdeen, 1914-1916. The war destroyed these groups. Fused with Glasgow Anarchist Group, 1916. Took over the College Liberal and Radical Rooms at 13 Burnbank Gardens, in May, 1917. Resumed its old name in May, 1920, in order to emphasise the need for Communist Unity, and founded Bakunin House. Prosecuted for sedition in 1921, for anti-Parliamentary agitation in the Red Commune. Extended its influence and became the Anti-Parliamentary Communist Federation, divided into federated groups. Stands on its unchanged platform of Anti-Parliamentary agitation and education towards the Social Revolution. Its goal is Communism, the only hope of the workers. All else it deems illusion. This organisation is working for a Free Society via the industrial Republic of Labour. For particulars of membership apply to the Secretary at Bakunin House.

This is the announcement as published in the 1st edition of this pamphlet. I resigned from the A.P.C.F. in February, 1933. Bakunin House was vacated in May, 1933.

In May, 1935, the A.P.C.F. established a press and headquarters at 56 Commerce Street, Glasgow, C.5. But its membership was falling away.

In 1936 division rose in connection with the Spanish struggle and a section formed an Anarchist Group. The old membership declined entirely and a small group continued to call itself the A.P.C.F. This group established headquarters at 65 Burnside Street, Glasgow, C.4. In October, 1941, the name was abandoned and the Group called itself the Workers' Revolutionary League.

As a virile organisation, the A.P.C.F. ceased to exist in 1933.

VII. F. W. Jowett

Place must be found in these notes for a reference to F. W. Jowett, who became First Commissioner of Works, in the 1924 Labour Government. Jowett was born in 1864 and commenced work in a Bradford weaving shed as a half-timer, when he was eight years of age. Jowett was elected to Parliament for West Bradford in 1906 and retained his seat until the Khaki Election of 1918. He sat for East Bratford, 1922-1924; and 1929-1931. During 1916-1918, Jowett harassed the Secretaries and Under-Secretaries for War and Home Affairs respectively, with searching questions in defence of civil liberty and the rights of conscience. As First Commissioner of Works, he remembered his Anti-Militarism, and rendered a service to humanity of great symbolic value. Jowett who had questioned the Labour members of the Coalition War Government, who had defended conscience and Anti-Militarism so fearlessly during the outcast and outlaw years of 1916-1918, gave the instruction for the words to be inscribed on Nurse Cavell's monument : "*Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone.*"

Before he became First Commissioner of Works, Jowett had read that these were Edith Cavell's last words. Consequently, he examined the file of documents relating to her case and discovered that the statement was correct. He enquired as to the omission of these vitally important last words from her statue, and was assured that it was within his power, as Minister in Charge of all similar monuments, to

have the words inscribed. Gently and delicately Jowett pursued his private enquiries and made sure that Nurse Cavell's next-of-kin would have no objection to the famous last words being remembered for all time. Then, without any publicity, until the job was done, Jowett ordered the inscription to be made. And so to-day, Nurse Cavell, brave servant of humanity, being dead yet speaketh. In the heart of London she proclaims her message: "*Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone.*"

Jowett's name will be linked forever with these last words because he insisted on a Government recording them. Enemy of war, fearless defender of a really united Anti-war front, Jowett gave life and hope to Nurse Cavell's memory and made a dead monument a vital message of human love and fellowship.

To my mind, it was the only service rendered to mankind by the Labour Government of 1924. It was the work of a man who, although he may have felt compromises and strategy were part of the parliamentary struggle, did not sacrifice his Socialist ideal to the cause of parliamentarism. I have paid my tribute to him in *The Word* and will do so in more compact pamphlet form. This small record of a fact of outstanding importance merits a reference in a work that condemns parliamentarism as a method of working class struggle and emancipation.

VIII. United Socialist Movement

The WORKERS' OPEN FORUM, GLASGOW, was founded in August, 1933, and conducted regular indoor and outdoor propaganda meetings down to July, 1934. In June, 1934, the W.O.F. drew up a provisional programme for a UNITED SOCIALIST MOVEMENT and invited the Townhead Branch of the I.L.P. — since that branch was in dispute with the Glasgow Federation of the I.L.P.— the Scottish Divisional Council, and the N.A.C.— to unite with the WORKERS' OPEN FORUM to form a pioneer Group of the UNITED SOCIALIST MOVEMENT. The Townhead I.L.P. seceded from the I.L.P., and agreed to unite with the W.O.F. to join this movement. The United Socialist Movement was established at 71 Stirling Road, Glasgow, in May, 1934, and these headquarters were renamed "Bakunin Hall." In November, 1937, the U.S.M. was forced to give up this hall owing to poverty. In May, 1939, it secured a new hall at 29 Castle Street, Glasgow. It was forced to vacate this Bakunin Hall in May, 1941, owing to political opposition from the owners. At present it has no hall but conducts its meetings in the editorial offices of *The Word*. It hopes, however, to re-establish a Bakunin Hall in Glasgow, for the sake of its traditions. The U.S.M. is the direct successor of the A.P.C.F. but considers the time has come to establish the struggle on a broader platform. It conceives the present expression of the struggle to be permanently Anti-Militarist as well as Socialist. Application for membership and federation, and all enquiries as to principles, aims, etc., may be addressed to the SECRETARY, U.S.M. 106 GEORGE STREET, GLASGOW, C1.

IX. The Duke of Bedford

On Friday, March 29th, 1940, I presided at the Glasgow St. Andrew's Hall meeting addressed by the Duke of Bedford (then Marquess of Tavistock) and John McGovern, M.P. in favour of peace. Since then I have became identified more and more with the Duke of Bedford in his Pacifist and Anti-Militarist activity. I respect him as one of the most earnest and sincere men of our time, a man who is moved by tense public affection. This tribute can be paid to few members of the capitalist legislature. The Duke of Bedford is prepared to follow Truth wherever it may lead him without regard to his own economic interests, personal safety, or social status. He is a man of fearless integrity. I am sure that brave Radical and Republican, Richard Carlile, would have honoured such a man.

For many years past the Duke has published his views in various Labour, Social Credit, and Pacifist papers ; and in pamphlet form. He believes in the payment of members of parliament because he considers that the poor man must have equal rights of representation with the rich. I believe that the payment of members, originally conceived as a radical democratic measure, broadens the basis of corruption and turns Socialist agitators into professional capitalist politicians. Payment of members has demoralised and destroyed the political Socialist movement. Actually, the Duke of Bedford has a low conception of both Houses of Parliament, and believes in an occupational or industrial franchise. This is getting very near to Anarchist-Syndicalist ideas ; just as his Social Credit theories, which he advances as not opposed to Socialism, but rather allied to Socialist measures, approaches the Anarchist idea of Mutualism or Equitable Society

The Duke of Bedford wishes to solve, either without violence, or with as little violence as possible, the problems of poverty and war ; and he has no respect for any institution that blocks the way to the solutions of these problems, the existence of which he condemns as social outrages.

In *The Word*, for August 1941, Vol. III., No. 1., pages 1-4, I published an exclusive interview with the Duke beneath the following captions :—

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD DEFINES HIS POSITION

Consistently, Uncompromisingly, and Unhesitatingly Opposed to All Hate Campaigns.

SUPPORTS PACIFISM : NOT FASCISM.

Demands Responsible and Drastic Amendments to 18 B.

UPHOLDS CIVIL LIBERTY IN WAR-TIME.

Has a Low Notion of All Parliamentary Placemen, Irrespective of Label.

When Invited by the Working-Class Movement in Britain, is Prepared to Speak for a United Pacifist-Socialist Opposition to War, in the Country, and in the House of Lords.

These headlines indicate the text of the interview and the nature of the Duke's belief. One day he will be honoured for maintaining them during a period of crisis.

SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENT.

Following Herbert Morrison's totally irrelevant denunciation of the Duke of Bedford in the House of Commons, and a millionaire press campaign against him, a debate took place in the House of Lords on November 18, when Lord Ponsonby and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood defended the Duke of Bedford, and Lord Crewe and Lord Simon denounced him.

Within one month of this debate, the Duke of Bedford took his seat in the House of Lords.

House of Lords

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3.

The Lord Chancellor took his seat on the Woolsack.

The Bishop of Ripon took the oath and subscribed the roll. His sponsors were the Bishop of London and the Bishop of St. Albans.

The Duke of Bedford signed the roll and made an affirmation, having a conscientious objection to taking the oath.

—Times **report.**

Describing the scene, the *Daily Telegraph* for December 4, says :—

The Duke of Bedford took his seat in the House. The Bishop of Ripon had just been introduced with two bishops at his side, and the customary bowings and raising of hats to the Lord Chancellor. The Duke, wearing a grey lounge suit, with a soft white collar, stood alone at the Clerk's table.

The Bishop had taken the oath with the words, "I swear by Almighty God . . ." The Duke declared his conscientious objection to that form and used the words, "I do solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm . . ."

Then he stepped to the Woolsack, shook hands with the Lord Chancellor and passed out of the Chamber.

Actually, the Duke wore a dark blue suit.

The *Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, Official Report* (Vol. 121, No. 7), for Wednesday, 3rd December, 1941, Col. 159, makes strange reading when read in conjunction with the above reports :—

The House met, the Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack.

LORD BISHOP OF RIPON.

Geoffrey Charles Lester, Lord Bishop of Ripon—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Duke of Bedford—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

Why "the usual manner ?" Why no reference to affirmation ? And why "sat" when the Duke of Bedford left the chamber at once ?

The Duke of Bedford is the first duke to affirm.

Early in 1942, three recently created Labour Peers took their seats in the House of Lords—"*in the usual manner*," that is, with oath and ceremony as described in Debrett ! But the Duke of Bedford walked into the Chamber alone and quietly affirmed, in a house bitterly hostile to him personally for being a man of character and upright opinion. How many Socialist M.P.'s have refused to take the oath and insisted on affirming even, in the more plebian atmosphere of the House of Commons ?

Whatever Anti-Parliamentarians may think, at least Socialist Parliamentarians and Freethinkers, no less than genuine believers in Christian pacifism, ought to honour the Duke of Bedford for his courage in this matter, and for the simplicity of his conduct. Whoever disdains the parasitism of pomp and ceremony introduces the test of use-values into public life, and so merits proletarian respect. Such a man is a great and outstanding citizen and a pioneer of the future commonwealth.

IF you are interested in this book, you should write for a Strickland Press catelogue, post-free, for 1d. stamp. Or send along 4/- for a mixed bargain bundle of issues of "The Word" and pamphlets by the Duke of Bedford; Sir Walter W. Strickland, Bt., B.A.; Leo Tolstoy; Guy Aldred and others. The bargain bundle is worth 8/- in all.

Every Socialist should purchase and circulate our pamphlets and "The Word."

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